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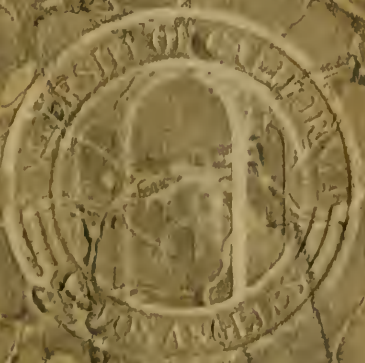
SPERRY — HISTORY OF CLERICAL CELIBACY IN V

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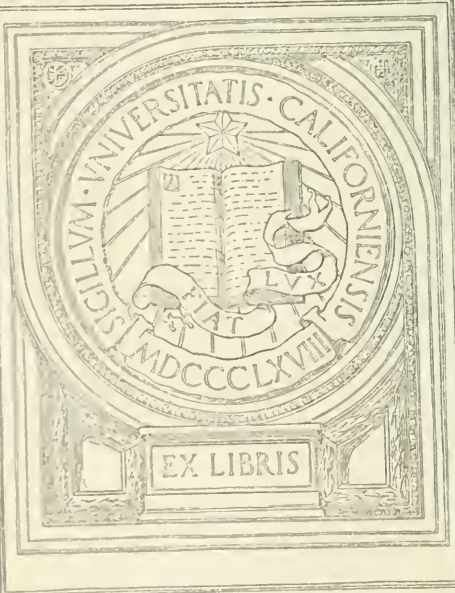


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AN OUTLINE OF THE
HISTORY OF CLERICAL CELIBACY
IN
WESTERN EUROPE

TO THE COUNCIL OF TRENT

BY
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PREFACE

The purpose of this thesis is to review the essential facts concerning the origin of clerical celibacy, its development and effects in western Europe to the time of the Council of Trent, and to present such extracts from the sources as are of special interest and importance in the history of this subject. Mr. Henry C. Lea's "Historical Sketch of Sacerdotal Celibacy in the Christian Church" has been used as a guide throughout, and in exhaustiveness and scholarship stands preëminent among the works upon the subject.

E. E. SPERRY.

SYRACUSE, N. Y., Mar. 1, 1905.



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INTRODUCTORY NOTE

At the outset it may be well to warn the reader that in forming an opinion concerning clerical morality there are certain important facts which should be kept constantly in mind. The written evidence upon the subject which has been preserved seems to indicate that during the Middle Ages and the opening centuries of the modern period the clergy as a class were very immoral. It must be remembered, however, that the period of time under discussion is a long one, extending from the fourth to the sixteenth century, and while the sources of information are comparatively abundant, it is unreasonable to suppose that they give us a fair and adequate picture of the clergy of all Europe for more than a millennium. Further, these sources consist largely of conciliar enactments and of the utterances of those engaged in reform. It is evident that they must be used with caution, for a future student who judged the nineteenth century only by its codes of criminal law and the denunciatory writings of social reformers would obtain a grotesque idea of its current morality.

Moreover, although the principal sources consist of the writings of the friends of the church they must not be given full credence,¹ because their authors were in the habit of resorting

¹To illustrate: Peter of Blois, who had vainly endeavored to compel the clergy of his English benefice to obey the rule of celibacy, wrote thus to Innocent III. concerning them: *Ipsi vero publice et aperte fornicantes predicabant, sicut Sodoma peccatum suum, et in palpebris popularis infamiae ducebant uxores, alter alterius filiam, sive neptem, tantaquerat cognationis connexio inter eos ut colligationes impietatis eorum nemo dissolvere prævuleret. . . . Erant enim quasi squamæ Behemoth, quarum una uni coniungitur, et spiraculum vitæ non incedit per eas. Terra proinde clamabat adversus eas, et cæli revelebant iniquitates eorum. Exactissima diligentia laborabam vitiorum in eis propagines venenosos excidere, sed facilius converterem lupos in oves, et feras in homines. Petri Blesensis, Ep. 152. Bib. Max. Pat. 24, 1064.* Yet the only specific charge which Peter brings against these men of whom he uses such strong terms of obfuscation is that they were married.

to a species of rhetorical denunciation in which gross exaggeration was an essential concomitant.

Another consideration must also be reckoned with when weighing the statements of mediæval churchmen concerning clerical morality. As priests were not only forbidden to marry, but early in the twelfth century were declared incapable of contracting a valid marriage, those who dwelt with women conjugally were adulterers in the eyes of the church and were so described in canons, decretals and the writings of the time. Similarly, the women who lived with them conjugally were described as concubines. This view is substantiated by Jacob Wimpheling for example, who, under the caption, "Concerning the Blindness of concubinary Priests," thus describes this class of priests in Germany just before the opening of the Protestant Revolt: "They think less of their parents and friends than of their concubines, dwelling with them to the end of their lives as if true and legitimate spouses. They allow them the full control of their households so that the other members of the family must obey. They dress them expensively and esteem them as highly as their mothers and sisters. And, posterity will scarcely believe it, when pregnant, the women are not ejected from the house, but allowed to be confined there. After the birth a festival is held as is the custom with laymen. The sons and daughters are provided with dowries and given in marriage with magnificent weddings at which the fathers themselves are present."¹ Although Wimpheling here stigmatizes the consorts of the priests as concubines, and in a preceding passage as harlots, he evidently is describing women who were treated in all respects as wives, save that the legal forms of marriage had been omitted.

Finally, the general question presents itself, how far the rule of celibacy was itself responsible for such sexual immorality as seems generally to have prevailed among the mediæval clergy? Those who are inclined to attribute the debasement of the clergy to the church's prohibition of marriage should

¹Apologia, 13.

recollect, however, that its laws appear to have been least observed during the very period when, to judge from the writers of the time, sacerdotal morality reached its lowest ebb.

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CLERICAL CELIBACY IN WESTERN EUROPE TO THE COUNCIL OF TRENT

The New Testament affords little information concerning marriage among the ministers of the Apostolic church. Whether or not all the Apostles were married cannot be determined, there being an incidental reference to the wife of Peter alone.¹ It is certain, however, that clerical marriage was not viewed with disapprobation in that period, for St. Paul has left descriptions of an ideal bishop, elder and deacon in which he mentions as a qualification conducive to their efficiency that they should be husbands of one wife, ruling their children well.²

Concerning marriage in general, the words of Christ show that he regarded it as the most sacred and indissoluble of human relations,³ and St. Paul considered it an institution salutary in its effect upon the individual and society.⁴ That the founders of the Christian church not only approved of marriage, but resisted any attempt to bring it into disrepute, is shown by St. Paul's prophecy concerning the heresies which were to afflict the church, among which he included the prohibition to marry.⁵

But contemporary with the belief that wedlock was a beneficent institution, and, as a rule, necessary to moral uprightness, was a tendency to exalt virginity. Christ himself intimated that those who refrained from marriage were superior in moral worth to all others, and while admitting that all natures were not capable of such restraint, recommended that those who

¹ Matt. 8, 14.

² I Tim. 3, 2, 4. I Tim. 3, 12. Titus 1, 6.

³ Matt. 19, 4, sqq.

⁴ 1 Cor. 7, 2.

⁵ Now the spirit speaketh expressly that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils. . . . Forbidding to marry and commanding to abstain from meats.—I Tim. 4, 1, 3.

had sufficient self-control should remain celibates.¹ St. Paul, although he approved of, and encouraged matrimony,² shared the conviction that it was a less holy state than virginity;³ and in the Book of Revelations the redeemed are described as "They which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins."⁴

Associated with the belief that virginity was the condition of life most pleasing to God and a proof of the highest moral character was another motive for abstaining from marriage. It was the conviction that celibacy enabled the Christian to give his undivided attention to the service of God and preparation for the life to come. This reason was set forth clearly by St. Paul in the words, "He that is unmarried careth for the things that belong to the Lord, how he may please the Lord. But he that is married careth for the things that are of the world, how he may please his wife."⁵

Whatever beliefs concerning celibacy the early Christians may have obtained from the Scriptures were re-enforced by similar doctrines which permeated the religious thought of that period. During the first three centuries of the Christian era there swept over the countries lying to the east and southeast of Europe an enthusiasm for virginity similar to that for poverty which, in the thirteenth century, spread through western Europe. It had its basis in the dualistic conception of the universe which underlay so much of the philosophy and the religion of that time and which set in opposition the spiritual and the material. This passion for the abnegation of man's physical nature became the source of numerous sects which made condemnation of marriage a principal tenet of their faith.⁶

¹ Matt. 19, 11, 12.

² 1 Cor. 7, 2. 1 Cor. 7, 9. See also 1 Cor. 7, 28.

³ 1 Cor. 7, 1, 8.

⁴ Rev. 14, 4.

⁵ 1 Cor. 7, 32, 33.

⁶ Stromata of Clement of Alexandria. Pat. Gr. 8, 1147 sqq., 1206 sqq. Epiphanius, adversus Haereses, Pat. Gr. 41, 1011.

Orthodox Christianity was profoundly influenced by the earnest propaganda of these fanatics; and although the precepts of the founder of Christianity did not enjoin celibacy, or even recommend that it should be generally practiced, these teachings exercised an incalculable influence upon the early church. A striking illustration of the power of this influence is found in the fanaticism of Origen, who, although a pupil of Clement of Alexandria, went to the extreme of self-mutilation.¹

Thus the great churchmen of the first centuries of the Christian era were within the influence of a powerful sentiment which exalted virginity; and at the same time, in Christ's preference for it, they could find an orthodox warrant for yielding to whatever inclination they might have to follow the impulses then common to religious natures. With these forces acting upon them, they decried matrimony in their voluminous writings which became the foundation of Roman Catholic doctrine, and recommended celibacy as a condition of life for Christians more holy and fitting than wedlock. Their predominant motive was probably the feeling that virginity was superior even to the most natural and moderate self-indulgence. The reasons which they adduced in favor of the unmarried state vary from their own bare assertions that it is the holiest condition² to the argument that those so living will be free from the cares and vexations of marriage.³ The self-denial requisite to such a life was declared to be an infallible means of obtaining salvation and a proof of supreme moral worth,

¹ Eusebius vi, 8.

The zeal of many of the clergy who were under these ascetic influences must have led them, like Origen, to fanatical extremes, for in the canons of Nicea and in the Apostolic Canons are prohibitions directed against such practices.

Si quis autem sanus seipsum abscidit, etiam si est in clero, cessare debet; et ex hoc nullum talem oportet ordinari. Con. Nicen. (325) c. 1. Harduin I, 324.

Cf. *Canones Apostolorum*, c. 22, Harduin I, 14.

² *Antiquitus autem necdum homo perfectus erat: ac ideo virginitatem (rem utique perfectam) capere necdum poterat.* Methodius, *Convivium decem virginum*, cap. 4. Pat. Gr. 18, 43.

³ Hieronymus, *Ep. ad Eustochium*, *Patrologia Latina* 22, 409.

surpassed only by martyrdom.¹ That the subject held an important place in the religious thought of that age is shown by the numerous treatises upon it; and the efforts made in them to ascertain the relative merits of virginity and marriage usually result in showing the latter to be an incomparably less honorable condition.²

The basis of these exhortations and injunctions to refrain from marriage was the teaching of Christ that carnal propensities must be overcome; a natural conclusion being that any relationship favorable to their gratification was, to some degree, evil. While St. Augustine was filled with the same fervent admiration for virginity to which St. Jerome gave expression, his *Liber de Continentia* contains no extravagant praises of continence. He recognized the naturalness and necessity of marriage and the difficulty of perfect self-restraint, although at the same time he considered the latter far superior.³

But the laudations of celibacy by the church fathers and the

¹ Totum fundamentum etenim sanctitatis atque justitiæ etiam castitatem esse dubitare non poterit, quisquis divinæ legis exempla tota intentus mente perspexit. Liber de castitate ascribed to Sixtus III. Magnum Bibliotheca Patrum, 5, 631.

Cyprian, De habitu virginum. Pat. Lt. 4, 460-467.

Epiphanius, Expositio fidei, Cap. 21. Pat. Gr. 42, 823.

² Et qui, inquit, hortaris matrimonium non contrahere? Quod virginitatem matrimonio longe præstantiorem sentiam. S. Chrysostomus, Liber de Virginitate, cap. 9. Pat. Gr. 48, 539.

Ergo hæc laus virginitatis egregia est, ut scilicet statuat quis virtutem ipsam omni esse laude præstantiorem . . . S. Gregorius Nysseni. Liber de Virginitate, cap. 1. Pat. Gr. 46, 322.

Laudo nuptias, laudo coniugium, sed quia mihi virginem generant . . . S. Hieronymus, Ep. ad Eustochium. Pat. Lt. 22, 406.

. . . et illi qui coniugia virginitati æquanda æstimant, miseri penitus et stulti sunt. Sulpicius Severus, Dialogus 2. Pat. Lt. 20, 208.

Centesimum episcopi et doctores qui omnibus omnia sunt, sexagesimum clerici et viduæ qui continentes sunt, tricesimum laici qui fideles sunt, qui perfecte Trinitatem credunt. His amplius non est in messe Domini. Monachi vero et virgines cum centesimis jungimus. Synodus S. Patricii, can. 18, Harduin 1, 1795.

³ S. Augustinus, De Bono Conjugali, cap. 9. Pat. Lt. 40, 380-381. See also Liber de Continentia, cap. 1. Pat. Lt. 40, 349, 357.

example of their rigidly ascetic lives were without immediate effect upon the discipline of the clergy. As neither Christ nor the Apostles had enjoined celibacy upon any part of the Christian body, its advocates lacked the powerful support which direct Scriptural command would have given them; and being in opposition to a universal and necessary institution, it was inevitable that the adoption of celibacy by the clergy was slow.

There is good evidence to show that during the fourth century a continuation of marriage relations after ordination was still permitted by the highest laws of the church. Certain members of the Council of Nicaea attempted to make celibacy obligatory, but their proposal was defeated.¹ The Council of Gangra (362) met the ascetic extremes of Eustathius by declaring anathema all who refused to accept the sacraments from the married priests or distinguished them in any way from the unmarried.² And the Apostolic Canons, which reflect the conditions of the church at the time of their con-

¹ While they were deliberating about this, some thought that a law ought to be passed enacting that bishops and presbyters, deacons and subdeacons should hold no intercourse with the wife they had espoused before they entered the priesthood; but Paphnutius, the confessor, stood up and testified against this proposition; he said that marriage was honorable and chaste, and that cohabitation with their own wives was chastity, and advised the synod not to frame such a law, for it would be difficult to bear, and might serve as an occasion of incontinence to them and their wives; and he reminded them, that according to the ancient tradition of the church, those who were unmarried when they took part in the communion of sacred orders, were required to remain so, but that those who were married were not to put away their wives. Sozomen, Ecclesiastical History, Bk. 1, Ch. 23. Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, 2, 256. Cf. Soerates Ecclesiastical History, Bk. 1, Ch. 11, Ib. 18.

² *Quicumque discernit a presbytero qui uxorem habuit, quod non oporteat eo ministrante de oblatione percipere, anathema sit.* Con. Gangreus, (362) c. 4. Harduin 1, 534.

That celibacy was not originally an obligation of church discipline was admitted by the highest mediæval authority upon canon law and apparently was a fact of common knowledge among educated men throughout the Middle Ages. Corpus Juris Canonici, Dist. 56, c. 13. Giraldus Cambrensis, Gemma Ecclesie, Dist. 2, cap. 6. *Rev. Brit. Med. Assoc. Ser. 21, Pt. 2, 187.*

pilation, not earlier than the close of the fourth century, threaten with deposition all ecclesiastics who dismiss their wives upon religious pretexts, and with expulsion from the church all who abstain from marriage as an abomination.¹

But while the clergy were allowed to take wives, their marriage had been under one restriction from Apostolic times. The command of St. Paul that bishops and deacons should not marry a second time² was the beginning of a series of church decrees which ultimately went to the length of prohibiting all marriage among the clergy.

The Council of Neocesarea (held between 314 and 325) enacted a canon which marks a long advance toward the culmination of this series of laws. It is to the effect that a priest who marries after ordination ought to be deposed.³ In the Apostolic Canons is an injunction similar in nature which seems to include deacons and subdeacons, though no mention of them is made, and which permitted lectors and chanters to marry after consecration if they chose.⁴

It would seem, then, that by the opening of the fourth century, both custom and ecclesiastical law forbade marriage after ordination except to chanters and lectors; and that the councils had positively prohibited the ordination of a man

¹ Si quis episcopus, presbyter, vel diaconus, vel omnino ex sacerdotali numero, a nuptiis, carnibus et vino, non propter exercitationem sed propter abominationem abstinet, oblitus quod omnia valde bona, et quod masculinum et femininum fecit Deus hominem; . . . vel corrigatur, vel deponatur, et ex ecclesia ejiciatur.—Can. Apost. c. 50, Harduin 1, 22.

² I Tim. 3, 2.

³ Con. Neo. Harduin 1, 281.

⁴ Can. Apost. c. 27. Harduin 1, 35.

As early as the date of the Council of Nicæa (325), it evidently had long been the custom that bishops, priests and deacons should not marry after ordination, for Paphnutius, in debating the proposal already mentioned, (page 6, note 1) says: "It would be sufficient that such as had previously entered on their sacred calling should abjure matrimony, according to the ancient tradition of the church; but that none should be separated from her to whom, while yet unordained, he had been united." Socrates, Bk. 1, Ch. 11. Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, 2, 18.

twice married after baptism, but allowed the ordination of men once married, and did not demand a discontinuance of marital relations after ordination. The explanation of the seeming inconsistency of the rules allowing those in orders to retain their wives, while forbidding those who were unmarried at the time of ordination to take wives, is probably that the lawmakers of the church felt that ordination could not annul obligations already assumed, though incompatible with the highest ideals of the Christian ministry; but that when once holy orders were taken, the ecclesiastic was bound to maintain as nearly as possible the ideal purity suitable to his position.¹

Although ecclesiastical laws at the end of the third century indicate uniformity of custom throughout Christendom in regard to clerical marriage, the opening of the fourth century saw an effort toward its further restriction in the west. The Spanish Council of Elvira (306) decreed that married bishops, priests and deacons should discontinue conjugal relations.² The canon was merely an expression of the authority of the local clergy and was not of force beyond the dioceses of the nineteen bishops who made up the Council, but it is the first decree proceeding from ecclesiastical authority which ordered that the members of the three higher orders should abstain from their wives. In the east contemporary legislation was even less stringent than the tradition of the third century, for it permitted unmarried deacons who did not take a vow of celibacy at ordination to marry afterward if they chose.³ But

¹ Sacerdotum enim tam excellens est electio, ut hæc quæ in aliis ecclesiæ membris non vocantur ad culpam, in illis tamen habeantur illicita. Leonis Papæ Epistolæ Decretales. Harduin 1, 1767. Id de sacerdotibus primo in loco statutum est; de episcopis, presbyteris et diaconibus, quos sacrificiis divinis necesse est interesse; per quorum manus et gratia baptismatis traditur, et corpus Christi conficitur; quos non solum nos, sed et scriptura divina compellit esse castissimos. Canones Synod. Romanorum ad Gallos Episcopos (c. 384), c. 3. Harduin 1, 1034.

² Placuit in totum prohiberi episcopis, presbyteris, ac diaconibus, vel omnibus clericis positis in ministerio, abstinere se ab conjugibus suis, et non generare filios; quicumque vero fecerit ab honore clericatus exterminetur. Con. Illib. (306), c. 33. Harduin 1, 253.

³ Con. Ancyra (c. 314), c. 10. Harduin 1, 276.

these canons, like those of Elvira, were merely local in effect and the only authoritative enactments of these decades binding upon the whole church were those of the General Council of Nicæa (325). This council took no action in regard to the preservation of continence by the married clergy, but trustworthy records of its proceedings state that an attempt was made to impose the rule upon them and that the attempt was defeated through the efforts of Paphnutius, an Egyptian bishop, and himself a celibate.¹

During the next sixty years there are no records of formal action upon clerical marriage by council or synod. But in 385 Siricius, Bishop of Rome, in reply to the Bishop of Tarragona, who had asked the late Roman bishop, Damasus, for aid in compelling his clergy to obey the canon of Elvira, issued a decretal in which he commanded, though not in express terms, that the ordained clergy should cease conjugal relations.² The decretal threatens with deposition from office all who knowingly disobey, and with incapability of promotion those who disobey through ignorance.³ The letter gives no reason for imposing the rule of perfect continence except the greater purity of the church⁴ and shows that the Spanish clergy in opposing the enforcement of the canon of Elvira, had based their right to marry on the permission given in Leviticus to the Hebrew priests.⁵

The issue of a positive command by Siricius indicates that he thought there was a prospect that his effort would find some

¹ See p. 6, note 1. For a discussion of the authenticity of the story of Paphnutius, see Lea, p. 50 sqq. Hefele, *Conciliengeschichte* 1, 431-5.

² *Quorum sanctionum sacerdotes omnes atque Levitæ insolubili lege constringimur; ut a die ordinationis nostræ, sobrietati ac pudicitiæ et corda nostra mancipemus et corpora, dummodo per omnia Deo nostro in his, quæ cotidie offerimus, sacrificiis placeamus.* Syricii Ep. Harduin 1, 849. From the context of this passage it would seem that by "sobrietas ac pudicitia" Siricius meant perfect continence.

³ *Ib.*

⁴ . . . *ut in die judicii, cum rursus advenerit, sine macula et ruga eam possit, sicut per Apostolum suum instituit, reperire.* *Ib.*

⁵ *Ib.* The passage of Leviticus referred to is 21, 14.

support among the bishops of Spain; and owing to the prevalence of Priscillianism there he had good reason for encouragement. Priscillian's teachings, based upon the dualism of eastern philosophy already mentioned,¹ and having much in common with Manichaeism and Gnosticism, were permeated with the idea that the world and the kingdom of God are mutually opposed, and consequently emphasized the ascetic tendencies in Christianity, making their realization one great aim of the Christian life. He had numerous followers in Spain, and in consequence the conditions there were favorable to the enforcement of Siricius' command.

While the enactment of the Canon of Elvira proves that these ascetic tendencies were beginning to influence the discipline of the clergy in Spain, there are few facts from which to form a conclusion as to the customs of various countries throughout Christendom. They probably varied, the clergy of the east usually retaining their wives after ordination, and those of the west, particularly the members of the higher orders, sometimes separating from them. Socrates, referring to the eastern church, states that the abstinence of married bishops from their wives was optional, and that many became fathers.² The canon of the Council of Gangra (362) anathematizing those who refused the ministrations of a married priest, also indicates that in the east the clergy often continued matrimonial relations unbroken.³

Thus, in the fourth century the advance in legislation concerning ecclesiastical marriage had been the canon of the Council of Elvira (306) and the decretal of Siricius (385). Several tendencies and conditions of the fourth and fifth centuries were favorable to their enforcement. The authority of the Bishop of Rome, now exerted in behalf of celibacy, was expanding and growing more potent. The hierarchy was becoming

¹ See p. 2.

² Socrates, *Ecclesiastical History*, Bk. 5, Ch. 22. *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers* 2, 132.

³ See p. 6, note 2.

more thoroughly organized and hence more easily disciplined. Christianity had been made the religion of the state and the sanctions of the civil authority added to its commands. The writings of the great churchmen inculcating and recommending virginity were in course of production. Monasticism was spreading, and its example of the severest self-mortification found many powerful and influential devotees. With these forces in coöperation, the success of the struggle for a celibate clergy was assured.¹

But one important and efficient aid was as yet lacking to the authorities of the church in the struggle for celibacy which had now begun; namely, the support and sanction of the secular authority. The imperial legislation of the fourth and early fifth centuries shows that the influence of the Emperor was not as yet exerted on the side of celibacy for the secular clergy, and that the many exhortations and polemics in its behalf, although proceeding from the greatest churchmen of the times, had not yet won the civil authority to aid in the establishment of this rule of church discipline. In fact the laws of the time indicate that this particular form of asceticism did not receive from the state even the indirect encouragement which might have been given. For example: Constantius and Constans, in granting (353, 357) certain exemptions and privileges to the clergy, include therein their wives and children;² and a law of almost a century later (434) enumerates wives and children among the legal heirs of priests and bishops.³ Of much greater significance is a law of Honorius and Theodosius (420) regulating the relations of clerics with women. After prohibiting the clergy from dwelling with other women than mothers, sisters or daughters, because of the scandal which might result, it gives express approval of clerical mar-

¹ *Le Célibat Ecclésiastique*, Boequet, p. 109.

² After making the grant of exemptions to the clergy the law proceeds thus: "Quod et coniugibus et liberis eorum et ministeriis, maribus pariter ac feminis, indulgemus, quos a censibus etiam iubemus perseverare immunes." *Cod. Theod. Lib. 16, Tit. 2, c. 10.* See also c. 11, 14. Haenel 1484-5, 1486, 1488-9.

³ *Cod. Theod. Lib. 5, Tit. 3.* Haenel 457.

riage by the statement that the wives of the clergy, having made their husbands worthy of the priesthood by their companionship, may well continue to associate with them.¹

An exception to the attitude of the government at this time toward a celibate clergy is found in a law of Arcadius and Honorius which recommends that bishops in making appointments to the priesthood should choose monks.² While this recommendation, if followed throughout Christendom, would have resulted in producing a celibate clergy, and therefore may be considered an aid in the execution of the purpose of Siricius and his party, there is a most important difference in the attitude of the secular and ecclesiastical authorities toward celibacy. The former here approved a clergy whose members had voluntarily subjected themselves to celibacy; the latter was entering upon a policy of coercion.

The authorities of the church were compelled to undertake the contest alone, and stimulated by the decretal of Siricius the bishops of western Europe soon began the attempt to force their married clergy to preserve continence. A decretal addressed to the African Church resulted in the Council of Carthage (390), which enacted a canon directed against the married clergy of the major orders. Moreover, by a decree to the effect that all who were concerned in the administration of the sacraments should likewise preserve continence, the council extended the rule to those in minor orders who served at the altar.³ The influence of Siricius upon Africa was seconded

¹ Illas etiam non relinqui castitatis hortatur affectio, quae ante sacerdotium maritorum legitimum meruere coniugium. Neque enim clericis incompetenter adiunctæ sunt, quae dignos sacerdotio viros sui conversatione fecerunt. Cod. Theod. Lib. 16, Tit. 2, c. 44. Haenel 1514.

² Cod. Theod. Lib. 16, Tit. 2, c. 32.

³ Con. Carth. (390) c. 2. Harduin 1, 951.

This principle for determining to what orders the prohibition to marry should be extended was set forth by St. Jerome. It was also contained in decretals issued by Innocent I and Leo I. Hieronymus, *Libri contra Iovinianum*. Lib. 1, n. 31. Pat. Lt. 23, 257. Leonis Ep. ad Rusticum 167. Harduin 1, 1761. Innocentii I Capit. 2, cap. 9. Harduin 1, 1001.

after 391 by the powerful influence of St. Augustine, whose early Manichaeism no doubt had some effect in enlisting his support, and the next Council of Carthage (401) did much to make effective its legislation concerning clerical continence by imposing a penalty for disobedience.¹

The Council of Toledo (c. 400) showed itself less zealous and did not seek to enforce in its full severity the rule which Siricius had enjoined. It permitted deacons to enjoy all the privileges of marriage, only making them ineligible for promotion where Siricius had commanded deposition; and while evidently intending that priests should practice continence, it only makes ineligible for the office of bishop those who become fathers, where again Siricius had commanded deposition.² The bishops of Italy showed themselves equally unwilling to impose upon themselves and their clergy so severe a rule as that of the Roman bishop and did no more than deny promotion to offenders.³ The synods of Gaul were more compliant and attempted to enforce the rule in its full severity, but a canon of the Council of Orange so late as 441 shows that it was yet customary for married deacons to continue conjugal relations.⁴

Whether or not the rule of continence was obeyed in the early church of Britain cannot be determined because of lack of historical records. According to Gildas the clergy were much demoralized, but he says nothing concerning their marriage.⁵ In Ireland there was as yet no attempt to introduce the new discipline.⁶

The fifth century, therefore, saw no new restrictions imposed upon the major orders in the west, but some of the regulations which in the past had been imposed upon the higher

¹ Con. Carth. (401) c. 3. Harduin 1, 987.

² Con. Tol. 1 (c. 400), c. 1. Harduin 1, 990.

³ Con. Taur. (c. 401), c. 8. Harduin 1, 960.

⁴ Con. Auras. (441), c. 22, 23. Harduin 1, 1786.

⁵ *Epistola Gildæ*. Hist. Brit. Saxon. Anglo-Danicæ Scriptores. Ed. Gale, Vol. 2, 23, 38.

⁶ Synodus S. Patricii (c. 450), c. 6. Harduin 1, 1791.

orders alone, were now extended to the minor clergy. The members of the lower grades to whom marriage was permitted were forbidden to take second wives;¹ and a council held at Rome (465) recommended that no married men should be admitted to the lower orders except those who had married virgins.² Leo the Great commanded expressly, for the first time, that those subdeacons who had taken wives should live continently with them, and that those who were unmarried should remain so.³ And although not demanded by law, the custom of ordaining as bishops only those who had been celibates originated in this century.⁴

In the east, also, the ecclesiastical laws concerning marriage were extended to the lower orders, and through enactment by the secular authority were made more effective. In one respect, indeed, this legislation went even further than did that of the ecclesiastical authorities of the west. While the Bishop of Rome forbade to the superior ranks of the clergy a continuation of marriage relations after taking holy orders, the possession of a wife and children prior to that time did not make the candidate ineligible for them. But in the code of Justinian it is prohibited absolutely that any one shall be ordained bishop who has children or grandchildren.⁵ The reasons given for this decree are interesting, since the command is not based upon the idea that the clergy should maintain an ideal purity, but upon grounds of worldly expediency. Evidently following the passage from St. Paul's Epistle to the Corinthians already referred to,⁶ it is argued that the cares which the position of husband and father entail, prevent the priest from devoting his whole energy and thought to divine service and ecclesiastical

¹ Con. Tol. 1 (400), c. 4. Harduin 1, 990. Con. Tur. 1 (461), c. 4. Harduin 2, 794.

² Con. Rom. (c. 465), c. 2. Harduin 2, 800.

³ Leonis Ep. Anastasio Episcopo Thessalonicensi, cap. 4. Mansi 5, 1281.

⁴ Hinschius, Kirchenrecht, 1, 146.

⁵ Cod. 1, 3, L. 42, § 1. Corpus Juris Civilis, Mommsen & Krueger 2, 26. Novellæ 6, cap. 1, § 3, 4. Ib. 3, 37.

⁶ See p. 2.

duties and that it is unbecoming that the wealth given to the church for pious uses should be employed by the bishop to enrich his posterity.¹

The ecclesiastical decree that the higher clergy should not marry after ordination was renewed by Justinian in the Code, and, as a penalty for disobedience, he pronounced illegitimate the children of such marriages, and with their mothers, incapable of inheritance.² The decree is repeated in the *Novellæ* and extended to subdeacons, offenders to be degraded to the status of laymen.³ Lectors were forbidden to marry a second time.⁴ But nowhere in the Code or *Novellæ* is to be found a law similar to the decretal of Siricius which ordained that conjugal relations should cease after ordination. The Council of Constantinople (692), nevertheless, repeated the ecclesiastical decree that those who become bishops should cease conjugal relations after ordination.⁵ This Assembly however made no innovations in the rules of the eastern church concerning ecclesiastical marriage, simply renewing the former canons and secular laws. These forbade all in holy orders, subdeacons, deacons, priests and bishops, to contract marriage after ordination;⁶ allowed marriage in the lowest grades and permitted all thus married to retain their wives after admission to the higher orders.⁷ As the canons required that bishops be celibates, it became customary to raise to the episcopate only monks. The enactments of this council are at present the law of the Greek church.

In the west disobedience of the rule requiring continence

¹ Cod. 1, 3, L. 41 § 2, 3, 4. Ib. 2, 26.

² Cod. 1, 3, L. 44. Mommsen & Krueger 2, 30.

³ *Novellæ* 6, cap. 5. Ib. 3, 43.

⁴ Ib.

⁵ Con. Quin. c. 12. Harduin 3, 1663-1666.

⁶ . . . et nos hoc servantes decernimus, ut deinceps nulli penitus hypodiatcono, vel diacono, vel presbytero post sui ordinationem contrahere liceat. Si autem fuerit hoc ausus facere, deponatur. Con. Quin. c. 6. Ib. 1662.

⁷ Quamobrem, si quis dignus inventus fuerit, qui hypodiatconus, vel diaconus, vel presbyter ordinetur, is ad talem gradum assumi nequaquam prohibeatur, si cum legitima uxore cohabitet. Con. Quin. c. 13. Ib. 1666.

seems to have been general during the fifth, sixth and seventh centuries. There were two potent causes calculated to produce such a condition. After the invasions of the northern tribes and the establishment of the Teutonic states upon Roman soil, ecclesiastical patronage was often in the hands of chieftains who naturally bestowed favors upon those of their followers who most deserved reward, and these being, for the most part, mere warriors, were unfit for positions in the church. Their motives for entering it were ambition or avarice, and their fierce natures unfitted them for the self-restraint then demanded of ecclesiastics. Over against this tendency toward lawlessness was the attempt to enforce the rule of absolute continence. Even in much more favorable conditions than those of the fifth and sixth centuries it was unlikely that such an attempt could be made without frequent disobedience or without producing new forms of licentiousness in many cases: but in a society which seems to have been so turbulent and lacking in moral restraint as was the society of that day,¹ it was inevitable that the unnatural self-restraint demanded by the church should lead to widespread evasions of the command. The acts of the councils of these centuries indicate that such was the case, and so numerous are their enactments against the continuation of marital relations and more serious offences that a citation of a few of those best illustrative of the conditions must suffice.

The Council of Tours (567) stated that the people suspected that many of the clergy continued forbidden relations with their wives. To prevent such uncanonical acts in the future the council decreed that, whenever a priest entered his house, he should be accompanied by at least one of his clerical subordinates. This monitor was to remain with him continually, even to sleep in the room with him. The punishment to be inflicted on those found alone with their wives was excommunication for a year and irrevocable deposition from office.²

¹ Salvianus, *De Gubernatione Dei*, Liber 6, cap. 11. Pat. Lt. 53, 120.

² *Con. Tur.* 2 (567), c. 19. Harduin, 3, 361; also c. 20, *Ib.* 362.

The Council of Macon (581) decreed that no woman should be permitted to enter the bedchamber of a bishop unless two priests or deacons were present.¹ That it was found necessary to introduce such a humiliating espionage, and to impose such severe penalties for infractions of the rule, establishes the fact that disobedience must have been frequent and difficult to overcome.

In Spain the harshness of the punishments to be inflicted on offenders indicates that the church authorities there had a similarly stubborn disobedience to combat. The guilty clerks were to be deprived of office and their consorts condemned to monastic life.² The secular laws show that the clergy of all ranks were living with their wives almost without concealment, and commands that such unions shall at once be severed by the bishop or judge and a penalty of one hundred lashes be inflicted on the wife.³ The ninth Council of Toledo (655), finding these severities in vain, condemned the children of married ecclesiastics to slavery.⁴ This enactment appears somewhat strange when viewed in connection with the fact that as late as the middle of the seventh century the sons of ecclesiastics were raised to the papal chair.⁵

So common was clerical marriage in Spain, even among bishops, that the secular power found it necessary to interfere for the preservation of ecclesiastical property. By royal law every bishop, upon his accession to office, was compelled to make an inventory of the episcopal possessions; his successor was to make a similar inventory, compare it with the preceding, and demand from the heirs whatever was lacking.⁶ Pelagius I introduced a similar custom in Sicily.⁷

¹ Con. Matis. 1 (581), c. 3. Ib. 451-2.

² Con. Tol. 8 (653), c. 4. 5. Harduin, 3, 962.

³ Fuero Juzgo, Liber 3, Tit. 4, L. 18.

⁴ Con. Tol. 9 (655), c. 10. Harduin, 3, 975.

⁵ Theodorus (642-649) natione Grecus, ex patre Theodoro episcopo . . . Liber Pontificalis, ed. Duchesne 1, 331. For similar instances dating from the fourth century, Ib. 227, 252, 287, 290, 319.

⁶ Fuero Juzgo, Liber 5, Tit. 1, L. 2.

⁷ Pelagius I. Ep. Cethego patricio. Pat. Lt. 69, 414.

The energetic and relentless spirit with which Gregory the Great began his task of improving ecclesiastical morality makes manifest his opinion that only the utmost severity would avail to correct the existing evils. He declared that if once a clerk lapsed from virtue he was to be irrevocably degraded to the status of a layman.¹ Gregory also included subdeacons in the law of absolute continence;² but he expressly permitted the married clergy of all ranks to dwell in the same houses with their wives.³

Aside from the contumacy of the clergy in continuing marital relations, contemporaneous writings make it evident that many of the clergy were morally degraded. Salvianus, a priest of Marseilles, living in the fifth century, includes the clergy in his fierce strictures upon the wickedness which surrounded him.⁴ Pelagius II permitted the ordination of a deacon who acknowledged that he had had children by a concubine after his wife's death; and although this fact itself is no unimportant index of clerical ideals, the excuse which Pelagius offers for his act is perhaps the worst indictment of the period and the church which he could have uttered.⁵ As the councils of other countries found necessary a constant repetition of canons directed against all forms of disobedience in the matter of marriage, from a continuance of marital relations to residence of strange women, it is evident that somewhat similar conditions prevailed generally.

¹ Gregorii Ep. Liber 5, Ep. 3, Pat. Lt. 77, 724. Liber 8, Ep. 24, Ib. 927.

² Gregorii Ep. Liber 1, Ep., 44. Ib. 505-506.

³ . . . hoc tantummodo adiecto, ut hi, sicut canonica decrevit auctoritas, uxores quas caste debent regere, non relinquunt. Gregorii Ep. Liber 9, Ep. 60. Ib. 997.

⁴ Salvianus, De Gubernatione Dei, Liber 6, cap. 12. Pat. Lt. 53, 122.

⁵ Et quamvis multa sint que in hujusmodi casibus observari jubeat subtilitatis auctoritas, tamen quia defectus temporum nostrorum, quibus non solum merita, sed corpora ipsa hominum defecerunt, districtiois illius non patitur in omnibus manere censuram, et ætas istius de quo agitur, future incontinentiæ suspicionem aufere dignoscitur, ut diaconatus possit ordinem provehi, temporum condescendentes, ut dictum est, defectui, concessisse nos noveris. Pelagius II, Ep. 14. Pat. Lt. 72, 747-748.

The clergy of England was partly a celibate clergy owing to the custom of choosing some of its members from the Monastic Orders, but among those not so chosen marriage must have prevailed to some extent, for it receives notice in the penitentials of Theodore, Archbishop of Canterbury (668-690) and Egbert, Archbishop of York (735-766).¹ Their statements do not warrant any conclusions concerning the extent to which it was practiced, however.

The condition of the Frankish clergy in the first half of the eighth century, as described by St. Boniface, was similar to that in Spain. Boniface was unsparing in his denunciations of their depravity,² and found association with them so abhorrent that he wrote to Gregory II, asking if he should continue to eat with them, or even to speak with them.⁴ In a letter to Egbert, Archbishop of York, he declared that he was compelled to restore adulterous priests to their positions, because if all the guilty ones were punished as the canons demanded, there would be no one to administer baptism and perform the other rites of the church.⁴ In Austrasia, Karlmann directed a severe blow at the licentious priests. He issued an edict to the effect that priests, monks and nuns guilty of adultery were to be flogged, and imprisoned for two years on bread and water, the punishment to be increased at the discretion of the bishop.

¹ Poenitentiale Theodori, Lib. 1, cap. 9, § 4. Poenitentiale Egberti, cap. 4, § 7. Haddan & Stubbs 3, 185, 420.

² Si invenero inter illos, diaconos quos nominant, qui, a pueritia sua semper in stupris, semper in adulteriis et in omnibus semper spurcitiis vitam ducentes, sub tali testimonio venerunt ad diaconatum et modo in diaconatu, concubinas quattuor vel quinque vel plures noctu in lecto habentes, evangelium tamen legere et diaconos se nominare nec erubescunt nec metuunt et sic, in talibus incestis ad ordinem presbiteratus venientes, in hisdem peccatis perdurantes et peccata peccatis adicientes, presbiteratus officio fungentes, dicunt, se pro populo posse intercedere, et sacras oblationes offerre, novissime, quo peius est, sub talibus testimoniis, per gradus singulos ascendentes, ordinantur et nominantur episcopi. Bonifacii Ep. Ep. 50. Epistolæ Merovingici et Karolini Aevi (M. G. H.), 1, 300.

³ Bonifacii Ep. Ep. 26. Ib. 277.

⁴ Bonifacii Ep. Ep. 91. Ib. 377.

In his efforts to suppress clerical marriage he showed far less vigor and confined himself to the prohibition, without penalties, that priests should not dwell with women. Wives are not specified, but seem to be included in the prohibition.¹ Nor was the capitulary of Pippin for the discipline of the Neustrian clergy severe. He simply decreed, without penalty for disobedience, that no priest should dwell with a woman unless it be his mother, sister, or niece.² Many of the clergy resisted these measures, and seeing in Boniface the instigator of the hated legislation, attempted to drive him from Austrasia by persecution, and resisted with violence the execution of the law.³ A capitulary of Louis the Pious fixing the punishment of priests guilty of rape and the enactment by several councils of canons forbidding the clergy to dwell with their mothers or sisters shows of what crimes they were suspected.⁴

The tenth century saw no change in the matter of clerical

¹ Karlmanni Principis Capit. (742), c. 6. *Capitula Regum Francorum* (M. G. H.), I, 25-26.

² Pippini Capit. Suess. (744), c. 8. *Ib.* 30.

³ S. Bonifatii Ep. 80. *Epistole Merovingici et Carolini Aevi* (M. G. H.), I, 358. Ep. 59, 317.

⁴ Ludov. Pii Capit. Eccles. (818, 819). *Capit. Regum Franc.* (M. G. H.), I, 278.

At first glance it might seem that provisions like those just referred to were the result of an overcautious desire to avoid possibility of evil, but the subjoined canons show that they were made necessary by existing crime.

. . . tamen, quod multum dolendum est, saepe audivimus, per illam concessionem (of residence with female relatives) plurima scelera esse commissa, ita ut quidam sacerdotum cum propriis sororibus concumbentes, filios ex eis generassent. Et idcirco constituit hæc sancta synodus, ut nullus presbyter ullam feminam secum in domo propria permittat, quatenus occasio male suspicionis vel facti iniqui penitus auferatur. *Con. Mog.* (888), c. 10. *Harduin*, 6, Pt. 1, 406.

Prohibendum, et modis omnibus interminandum est, ut nullus sacerdos eas personas feminarum, sicut et in canone insertum continetur, de quibus suspicio esse potest, in domo sua habeat. Sed neque illas quas canones concedunt; (quia, instigante diabolo, etiam in illis scelus frequenter perpetratum reperitur, aut etiam in pedissequis illarum;) scilicet matrem, amitam, sororem. . . . *Con. Nam.* (895), c. 3. *Ib.*, 457-458.

marriage. The members of the clergy openly maintained wives, and public opinion does not seem to have condemned them. Although such indifference to discipline was prevalent, there were some earnest churchmen who remembered the canons and sought to enforce them.¹ But the habits of the great body of the clergy could not be altered by fitful and un-systematic opposition, and marriage was practiced by them in many parts of western Europe.²

That result of ecclesiastical marriage which the church had anticipated with dread, the heredity of church property in the families of priests, made itself felt in this century. The accumulations of property which the church had made during eight centuries were looked upon as a storehouse from which the poor and pleasure-loving clergy might obtain the means to satisfy their desires and enrich their families.³ No doubt the

¹ Richeri Historia, Liber 2, cap. 81. Scriptorum (M. G. H.) 3, 606.

Synod. August. (952), c. 4. Harduin, 6, Pt. 1, 617.

Con. Ansan. (990), c. 5. Mansi, 19, 101.

Con. Piet. (1000), c. 3. Harduin, 6, Pt. 1, 764.

² Dehinc intulit lamentabile et nimis lugendum, ut Domini sacerdotes publice ducant uxores, et si filii eorum valeant promoveri? Leo VII, Ep. 15. Pat. Lt. 132, 1086-87.

Si multinubos a clericatu repellerem, quem nisi puerulos in Ecclesia relinquerem? Ratherius, Bishop of Verona, Itinerarium, cap. 5. Pat. Lt. 136, 586. See also Constitutiones Ottonis, Const. et Acta Pub. Imperatorum et Regum (M. G. H.), 1, 30.

Praeterea quod dicere nudet, tacere autem periculum, quidam in tantum libidini mancipantur, ut obscenas meretriculas sua simul in domo secum habitare, una cibum sumere ac publice degere permittant. Attonis Vercellensis Episc. Ep. 9. Pat. Lt. 134, 116.

Hunt, The English Church from Its Foundation to the Norman Conquest, 269, 270.

³ . . . ut habeant quoque unde filiis uxores, filiabus acquirant maritos, vineas et campos, postremo unde mammonæ iniquitatis valeant deservire. Ratherius, De Contemptu Canonum, Pt. 1, c. 4. Pat. Lt. 136, 491.

Quarum illecebris illecti, suæ domui, cunctæque familiæ ac suppellectili eas præse diduciant, suumque post obitum scortum hæredem constituunt, et quidquid de facultatibus ecclesiæ, vel eleemosynis, seu undecunque acquirere possunt, hujusmodi manibus distrahendum relinquunt. . . . Sunt etiam qui nudi ad Ecclesiam veniunt, sed de ejus beneficiis accrescunt. Hi primum

title to landed property usually remained in the monastery, parish church, or chapter to which it had been given; but where the incumbent clergy were married, its income would naturally be directed to the maintenance of their families, instead of being applied to charitable uses, or employed in improving and extending ecclesiastical property. If two or three generations of clergy brought up their sons for the priesthood, the church would be deprived of the usufruct of the property involved for nearly a century, which of course, would be tantamount to its loss for that length of time.

The history of the first half of the eleventh century is a continuation of the history of the tenth century, with perhaps more determined effort by those in authority to enforce the canons. The Synod of Pavia (1018) held by Benedict VIII for the single purpose of restraining clerical incontinence, reduced to slavery the children of ecclesiastics and declared anathema any judge who might free them.¹

If the testimony of contemporaries is reliable, the execution of such decrees would have meant the suspension of all ecclesiastical functions in the west. Priests and deacons married after the custom of laymen, begot children and made them their heirs; and even the bishops dwelt openly with their wives.² According to the monkish biographer of Peter Damiani, the two heresies of simony and ecclesiastical marriage were practiced with impunity in the whole church.³ One German bishop,

inopie causa continentiam fugunt, et postmodum ditati, meretrices asciscunt. Atto, Bishop of Vercelli, Ep. 9. Pat. Lt. 134, 116-117.

See also, Synod of Tours (925). Harduin, 6, Pt. 1, 561.

¹ Con. Tic. (1018), c. 1, 4. Harduin, 6, Pt. 1, 813, 814. The canons of the Council of Bourges (1031) were less severe than usual, only degrading to the position of lector or chanter those who had wives. Con. Bit. c. 5. Ib. 849.

² *Itaque cum vulgus clericorum per viam effrenatæ licentiæ nemine prohibente, graderetur, cœperunt ipsi presbyteri ac diacones (qui tradita sibi sacramenta Dominica mundo corde castoque corpore tractare debebant) laicorum more uxores ducere, susceptosque filios heredes testamento relinquere; nonnulli etiam episcoporum verecundia omni contempta, cum uxoribus domo simul in una habitare.* Victoris III, Dialogi, Liber 3. Pat. Lt. 119, 1002-1003.

³ Joannes Monachus, Vita P. Damiani, cap. 16. Pat. Lt. 144, 133.

while urging his priests to shun the pestiferous society of women, gives them by implication permission to marry by the injunction that if they could not attain perfection, they should at least guard with care the bonds of marriage.¹ In England, it was customary for the members of the clergy to marry and in some cases polygamy was practiced.²

Such lenience on the part of those in authority, however, was soon superseded by harsh severity. The year 1049 saw the beginning of a crusade against the married clergy which was to end in their subjugation. Its principal instigator was the hermit, Peter Damiani. His desire for ecclesiastical purity amounted to a fanaticism which stopped at no sacrifice of self, or punishment for the guilty. During the short pontificates of Clement II and Damasus II little had been done to force the clergy to respect the canonical obligations concerning marriage. But with the elevation of Leo IX to the Papacy, and the exhortations and revelations of Damiani, supported perhaps by the influence of Hildebrand, there began a vigorous struggle for reformation. The Synod of Mainz (1049) held by Leo IX, in coöperation with Henry III, forbade marriage and imposed severe penalties for disobedience.³ A council at Rome decreed that the wives of the clergy should be attached as slaves to the Lateran Palace, and all the bishops of the church were urged to inflict the same punishment upon the wives of priests.⁴ Stephen IX held several councils for the express purpose of eradicating the evil of clerical marriage.⁵

Nicholas II realized that it was not a repetition of prohibitions which was needed, but new measures of coercion. The customary penalties of degradation from office and expulsion from the ranks of the clergy having failed of success, the

¹ Adam Bremensis Gesta Pontificum Hammaburgensis Ecclesiæ, Liber 3, cap. 29. Pat. Lt. 146, 580.

² Harduin VI, Pt. 1, 771 sqq.

³ Adam. Brem. Gesta Pont. Hamm. Liber 3, cap. 29. Pat. Lt. 146, 580.

⁴ Peter Damiani, Dissert. 2, Opusc. 18, cap. 7. Pat. Lt. 145, 411.

⁵ Chronicon Monast. Casin. Liber 2, cap. 97. Script. Rer. Ital, Muratori 4, 409.

Council of Rome (1059), stimulated by the reforming spirit of the eleventh century, decreed that no one should attend mass when said by a married priest.¹ This canon possesses an unusual importance and interest, for it seemed to question the doctrine that the sacraments were efficacious in polluted hands, and contravened the long-established custom of excluding the laity from participation in clerical discipline.² Its wide departure from the doctrines and tradition of the church prove the determination of the Papacy to carry its point and the stubbornness with which the clergy resisted. All these efforts were evidently ineffective, for Nicholas II found it necessary to repeat the decrees, and his words indicate that the clergy had ignored them.³

In the struggle to retain their wives the clergy did not offer merely a passive resistance, but resorted to argument in support of their position.⁴ One learned and clear-sighted ecclesiastic of unknown name wrote a vigorous and cogent defense of clerical marriage, in which he exposed the hypocrisy of the clergy, and unhesitatingly prescribed wedlock as the only remedy for their debased morals.⁵ The upper clergy, whom he declares were stained by the vilest crimes,⁶ were the parti-

¹ Ut nullus Missam audiat presbyteri, quem seil concubinam indubitanter habere, aut subintroductam mulierem. Con. Rom. (1059), c. 3. Harduin, 6, Pt. 1, 1062.

² See Lea, p. 203, note 2.

³ Decretales Nicolai Papæ, c. 3, 4. Baluzius et Mansi, 2, 118-119.

⁴ Petri Damiani Ep. Liber 5, Ep. 13. Pat. Lt. 144, 363.

⁵ Hic est autem, si diligentur inspicitur, tocus eorum manipulus zizaniæ, tocus conventus insanis, ut dum clerici licita unius uxoris conjugia, scilicet unius mulieris consortia, pharisaico devieti, quod absit! furore relinquere cogantur, fornicatores et adulteri et aliarum pravitarum turpissimi ministri cum ipsis efficiantur. Pseudo-Udalrici Ep. Lib. de Lite (M. G. H.), 1, 259-260.

⁶ Quid vero pro hominibus fieri potest stolidius, quid divinæ maledictioni obligatius, quam cum aliqui eorum, vel episcopi, videlicet vel archidiaconi, ita præcipientes sint in libidinem, ut neque adulteria neque incestus neque masculorum, pro pudor! turpissimos amplexus sciant abhorre, quod casta clericorum conjugia sibi dicant fetere et ab eis non verè justitiæ compassione, sed fasle justitiæ dedignatione clericos non ut conservos rogent vel moneant continere, sed ut servos iubeant et cogant abstinere. Ib. 258-259.

cular objects of his denunciation, because in their efforts to discipline their subordinates, they winked at concubinage and licentiousness while stigmatizing marriage. "Unreasonable men," he exclaims, "who ought rather to teach us that we should fear to sin in the sight of Him from whom nothing is hid, than that we should blush to live as men in the sight of our fellows."¹

The words of St. Paul to the Corinthians: "Nevertheless to avoid fornication let every man have his own wife and every woman have her own husband,"² gave the married clergy a Scriptural warrant of great authority upon which to base their claims, and this passage was often used by them as a defence of marriage.³ In one of his numerous polemics upon the subject, Damiani maintained that this advice was not meant for all men, but only for those citizens of Corinth who could take wives without disobeying any law.⁴ He further argued that if the passage quoted from St. Paul permitted priests to marry, the same privilege was also conceded to monks and abbots; and as the two sexes were not governed by different laws, the permission would include the sacred virgins.⁵ The clergy further adduced as a reason for marriage the difficulty of subsisting upon their scanty stipends without the economical management of a wife. Damiani's reply was that if their livings yielded so little they were the less able to support a wife and children.⁶

Damiani's attack upon clerical marriage was at no time prompted by considerations of worldly expediency. It was not the danger to ecclesiastical property which influenced him, but the thought that the sacred ministrations of the church should be performed by men who were bound by the ties of a union which, to his devout asceticism, seemed pollution. It was the

¹ *Ib.* 259.

² *I Cor.* 7, 2.

³ *Petri Damiani Ep. Liber 5, Ep. 13. Pat. Lt. 144, 363.*

⁴ *Ib.*

⁵ *Petri Damiani, Opuscula 18, Diss. 1, cap. 4. Pat. Lt. 145, 392-394.*

Ib.

ideal purity alone for which he struggled, and he frankly admits that the married clergy, in one diocese at least, were men of merit, and only deserved of condemnation because they had wives.¹

In Lombardy, particularly in Milan, the attempts of Damiani to coerce the clergy into conformity with the canons were accompanied by riots and insurrection. The chief source of the violence, however, was not the preaching or measures of Damiani, but the personal animosity of rival candidates for the archbishopric of Milan, one of whom made celibacy the war-cry of his party in order to gain the support of the Catharist element of the Milanese population and the aid of Rome. The married clergy of Milan formed an important part of the schismatic party which elected the anti-pope, Honorius II. Not until clerical marriage had become secondary to other questions involved in the contest did the clergy of Milan finally submit to the Pope and declare obedience to the canons prohibiting marriage.²

The clergy of the other parts of Europe likewise persisted in their defence of the right to marry, and the re-enactment by Alexander II of the canon of 1059 was ineffectual.³ Damiani, apparently convinced that exhortations and ecclesiastical penalties were useless, appealed to a secular ruler for aid. In a letter to Adelaide, Duchess of Piedmont and Savoy, he requested that she use the force of temporal power to coerce the clergy of her dominions into obedience.⁴ But all seemed in vain; deposition from office, degradation to the status of layman, dissolution of the ties between pastor and congregation, all had failed for the time, of accomplishing their purpose, and Alexander II, though under the spur of Damiani, abandoned the ideals of the reformers. He did not abrogate the

¹ *Ib.* 398.

² A full account of these events is given by Arnulphus, *Gesta Archiep. Mediolan.* Pat. Lt. 147, 309-310, 316-319, 321-323.

³ *Con. Rom.* (1063), c. 3. Harduin, 6, Pt. 1, 1139.

⁴ *Petri Damiani, Opusc.* 18, Diss. 3, cap. 2. Pat. Lt. 145, 418, 419.

rules of discipline, but suspended and relaxed them in important particulars, limiting the infliction of penalties to open and defiant offenders, or commuting the more severe one of deposition from office into the performance of the customary canonical satisfaction.¹

With the election of Hildebrand to the Papal chair, however, leniency was succeeded by harsh and vigorous measures. He had a new motive of tremendous power driving him to execute the canons concerning marriage. For a celibate clergy was indispensable to a realization of his views concerning the position of the Pope in the affairs of the world. His theories are clearly set forth in the *Dictatus Papæ*. In this enunciation of the Papal rights it is asserted that no council can be regarded as general without the Papal sanction and that the Pope alone can depose and reinstate bishops. This is, of course, is tantamount to a declaration that the Pope is autocrat of the church. As to the powers of the Pope in secular affairs, Gregory declared that he might depose emperors, that he might annul the decrees of all earthly authorities, but that no one could annul Papal decrees, and that he was to be judged by no one.² The *Dictatus Papæ* thus outlines a theory of the world in which all earthly rulers and powers are amenable and subordinate to the Pope. To suppose that Gregory intended that the Pope should constantly exercise supervision over all the princes and magnates of the earth is unreasonable. The supremacy for which he contended was a conditional, or contingent, supremacy which his obligations as Pope gave him the right to possess. If he were responsible to God for the salvation of every soul in Christendom, the power to guide every soul, to protect it from whatever he thought might be leading it to destruction, was his indispensable prerogative. If the measures of emperor, or king, were inimical to the spiritual welfare of his subjects, it was the duty of the Pope to rescue them by persuading or coercing their ruler into a change of

¹ Alexander II., Ep. 125. Pat. Lt. 146, 1407. Ib. Ep. 118. Ib. 1405-1406. Ep. 133. Ib. 1410.

² Jaffé, *Bibliotheca Rerum Germanicarum*, 2, 174-175.

policy. Such a supremacy in the temporal world was a logical deduction from the Papal supremacy in the spiritual world. Gregory's purpose in seeking to realize this dream was a noble one; it was not to satisfy a greed for power, but to ameliorate the condition of mankind by the wise and beneficent rule of a divinely appointed sovereign, who feared no earthly magnate, who acted only from the purest motives, who would combat all evils, and rectify all wrongs upon the widest principles of justice.

As spiritual chief of the world it was necessary that the Pope should have for his agents a body of men without local attachments and without personal interests to which they might sacrifice the welfare of the church. It was necessary that their powers should be devoted exclusively to the defence and aggrandizement of this great ecclesiastical institution. To create a body of men with such singleness of purpose, it was also necessary, besides cutting off all personal interests, to distinguish them sharply from the people they were to rule. The indelible spiritual attributes conferred at ordination accomplished this to some degree, but celibacy was a much more obvious and striking distinction than the invisible spiritual change which ordination was said to effect. The enforcement of the rule of continence would thus accomplish two important purposes: it would deprive the clergy of the cares, ambitions and interests which the rearing of a family involve, and it would isolate them from their fellow men. Other motives no doubt influenced Gregory. Being a monk, he was saturated with monastic ideals, and motives of pure asceticism were probably combined with those of papal supremacy.

Immediately after his election Gregory began the task in which all his predecessors had failed. He recognized that no new canons were needed, but rather a vigorous application of the spur to the lagging bishops. Numerous synods were convoked to act upon the matter of clerical marriage and care was taken that all ecclesiastics should be informed of their decrees.¹ The canon of 1059 prohibiting attendance at mass

¹ Lamberti Hersfeldensis Annales (ann. 1074), Script. (M. G. H.), 5, 217-18.

when read by a married priest was re-enacted,¹ the Council of Poitiers threatening the disobedient with excommunication.² Gregory appealed to temporal rulers to aid him. In a letter directed to Rudolph, Duke of Swabia, and Bertolph, Duke of Carinthia, he exhorted and admonished them not to sanction the installation of any married ecclesiastic, and urged them to use force, if necessary, to prevent such men from officiating.³ Similiar exhortations were addressed to other princes.

But the measures to which he next resorted to compel the refractory clergy to obey, made those of the past seem conservative. In a letter addressed to the clergy and laymen of Germany, he stated that certain bishops and priests of that country had taken wives, and that all inferior clergy and laymen were released from obedience to such spiritual leaders.⁴ As clerical marriage was general throughout Germany,⁵ and as ecclesiastical influence and the penalties of the church were then among the most effective restraints upon disorder, this permission gave to the lawless and turbulent elements of the population a most dangerous license. It was a destruction of the most potent force then on the side of legal order, and a dissolution of the ties most venerated by the people of that age. It was a violation of the most ancient traditions of the church, a blow at religion itself, for there was then no other spiritual guidance and authority than that of the clergy of the Roman Church. To release the people from obedience to the

¹ Con. Rom. (1074) c. 17. Harduin, 6, Pt. 1, 1542.

² Con. Pict. (1078), c. 9. Ib. 1576.

³ Gregorii VII., Ep. Liber 2, Ep. 45; Jaffe, 2, 158.

⁴ Jaffé Bib. Rer. Ger. 2, 532. The canon of the Council of Rome (1059), forbidding attendance at the masses of married priests was essentially the same as this, but as the release from obedience was not explicit and the canon ignored, its full significance was not seen.

⁵ Nunc videndum, unde hæc nefanda consuetudo usquequaque inoleverit, quod quasi licentes passim uxores duxerint. De Offendiculo Honorii Augustodunensis Presbyteri et Scholastici, cap. 27. Lib. de Lite (M. G. H.), 3, 46. See also Ib. 49, 50.

clergy was a daring measure and the more daring because it was opposed by even Gregory's supporters. His former decretals had called forth an uproar of protestation and opposition from all the married clergy of western Europe. They defended themselves with the assertion that the church formerly permitted the ordination of married men;¹ they declared that the man was a heretic who forgot the words of Christ that continence was not for all, and the counsel of the Apostle, who recommended that those should marry who could not restrain themselves. They accused him of violently compelling men to live as angels, and, by denying the demands of nature, of giving rein to adultery and all kinds of uncleanness. They declared that they would surrender their offices rather than their wives.²

In the polemical literature which the measures of Gregory called forth the cause of the married clergy was worthily defended by champions who possessed learning and acumen and had the welfare of the church at heart. The twofold basis of their defence was that celibacy was not prescribed in the Old Testament, the Gospels, or Epistles;³ on the contrary, that marriage was expressly recommended; and that celibacy was the undoubted cause of crime and moral degradation among the clergy. As they were acquainted with the story of Paphnutius and the efforts of the advocates of celibacy to have the Council of Nicæa enact a canon prescribing the rule of contin-

¹ Petri Damiani Opuscula 18, Diss. 2, cap. 3. Pat. Lt. 145, 402.

² Adversus hoc decretum protinus vehementer infremuit tota factio clericorum; hominem plane hereticum et vesani dogmatis esse clamitans, qui oblitus sermonis Domini quo ait; "Non omnes capiunt hoc verbum; qui potest capere, capiat," et Apostolus; "Qui se non continet, nubat; melius est enim nubere quam uri;" violenta exactione homines vivere cogeret ritu angelorum, et dum consuetum cursum nature negaret, fornicationi et immunditie frena laxaret; quod si pergeret sententiam confirmare, malle se sacerdotium quam conjugium deserere, et tunc visurum eum cui homines sorderent, unde gubernandis per ecclesiam Dei plebibus angelos comparaturus esset. Lamberti Hersfeldensis Annales (ann. 1074), Script. (M. G. H.) 5, 218.

³ Tractatus pro clericorum connubio. Lib. de Lite (M. G. H.), 3, 588. Tractatus Eborac. Ib. 646, 647-648.

ence, its failure to do so was made the basis of a claim that clerical marriage was still canonical.¹ The innumerable marriages of priests were cited as precedents in support of this contention, and the repeated promotion of the sons of priests to the episcopal office was adduced, apparently to prove that in the past the offspring of clerical marriages had not been regarded with disfavor by the church authorities.²

The replies of the partisans of Gregory consisted largely of numerous citations from Augustine, Jerome, Gregory the Great and others of the church fathers, along with those Papal decretals and canons in which a continuance of marriage relations after ordination was forbidden. To the argument that since marriage was permitted by the old dispensation to the Hebrew priests and had not been forbidden by any law of the New Testament, and was therefore permissible for the priests of the church of Christ, they replied that the Levites were allowed to marry because only the members of that tribe could serve as priests, and that its perpetuation was therefore necessary.³ They declared that the advice of St. Paul 'that each man have his own wife and each woman her own husband,' was intended only for those who could marry canonically, not for those who had taken a vow of chastity.⁴ The reason for celibacy which was most often presented, and which no doubt had much weight with a large number of the clergy, was that those who officiated at the altar and sacrificed the body of Christ should not indulge in carnal pleasures.⁵ This incompatibility which

¹ Cameracen, et Noviomen. Clericorum Ep., Lib. de Lite (M. G. H.) 3, 575.

² Possemus innumerabiles clericorum filios ab antiquis patribus ecclesiasticorum ordinum et honorem dignitatibus sublimatos adicere. Possemus et viventes adhuc episcopos de clericis, immo de presbyteris, in Italia, in Gallia, in Normannia ab ipso papa intronizari concessos aut et ordinatos ostendere . . . Tract. pro. cleric. connubio. Ib. 595.

³ Libellus Honorii Aug. Ib. 29 sqq.

Apologeticus Bernaldi, Ib. 2, 73.

⁴ Apologeticus. Ib. 72-73.

⁵ Non est enim congruum carnali copulæ servire et Christi hostiam cum angelo immolare. Lib. Honorii Aug. Lib. de Lite (M. G. H.), 3, 35.

Quis igitur sanæ mentis prædictas apostoli sententias de exercendo conjugali

was asserted to exist between marital and religious duties received copious illustration from the events of the Old Testament. In the passage of Exodus (19, 14) stating that "Moses went down from the mount unto the people and sanctified the people," the word sanctified was construed to mean that the men had abstained from their wives for three days, the warrant for this interpretation being the statement that, on his return, "Moses commanded the people that they should be ready against the third day and come not at their wives." Generalizing from this instance, it was maintained that the word sanctified, wherever used in the Old Testament, signified abstinence from women.¹ It was argued that if those who approached the mountain in which an angel appeared were thus sanctified, much the more should he be sanctified, who, in the service of the altar, daily approached the Lord of angels.²

But in spite of the resistance of the married clergy Gregory persisted, and as a last means of coercion, annihilated their authority over the people. The result is described by a contemporary, a friend of Gregory's reforms. The ministrations of married priests were refused by the laity, with the consequence that all offices of the church were frequently suspended. Some of the priests were driven from their homes and died of starvation, others suffered the most humiliating outrages. The destruction of the moral force of the clergy was followed in many places by crime, heresy and disorder.³

opere sacerdotibus ascribat, quorum cottidianum est officium non modum orare, sed et divina sacramenta contrectare, præsertim cum in eodem loco etiam cuilibet Christiano tempore orationis iniungatur continentia. Apologeticus Bernaldi, Lib. de Lite (M. G. II.), 2, 73.

¹ Lib. Honorii Aug. Ib. 3, 43.

² Ib. 43-44. For similar arguments see Apologeticus Bernaldi. Ib. 2, 72 sq.

³ Quis enim catholicus in tanta matris ecclesie perturbatione non doleat? Quis christianus in tam indigna christianitatis conculcatione, si qua habeat, visera miserationis non exerat? Quæ autem ad hæc deffenda [perturbatio sit, nullus sexus, nulla conditio, nulla fortuna, nulla potest ignorare religio. Quid enim aliud etiam muliercularum textrina et opificum officinæ jam ubique personant, quam totius humane societatis jura confusa, christinæ sanctitatis

The untiring energy and indomitable will which could resort to such doubtful measures left an impress upon the public mind of Europe, and although Gregory did not fully accomplish his purpose, he was recognized as the most successful champion of sacerdotal celibacy which the church had yet

statuta convulsa, popularis status subitam immutationem, ecclesiastici decoris impiam delirationem, novas in dominos perfidias servorum, omnimodas in servos suspiciones dominorum, infidissimas sodalium proditiones, dolosas in ordinatam a Deo potestatem machinationes, amicitiam ledi, fidem negligi, et impudentiori malitiæ licentia imperia, et christianæ religioni contraria dogmata induci, et quod miserrimum est, omnia hæc portenta eorum, qui christianitatis duces vocantur, vel permissione concedi, vel consensu fulciri, vel auctoritate roborari. Plebius error quam semper quæsit, opportunitate adepta usque ad furoris sui satietatem iniuncta sibi, ut ait, in clericorum contumelias obedientia crudeliter abutitur. Hi publici illusionibus adducti quocunque prodeunt clamores insultantium, digitos ostendentium, colaphos pulsantium proferunt. Alii, injustis proscriptionibus rebus sic ammissis præsentiam eorum, inter quos modo honesti et clari erant, ferre non valentes, egeni et pauperes profugiunt. Alii membris mutilati non satis discretam pro lapsu suo sententia ad evidens tam prudentium correctorum testimonium per omnium ora circumferunt. Alii post longos cruciatus superbe necati sanguinis sui vindictam de justis et omnipotentis defensoris manu incessanter expetunt. Quidam ob infirmitatis suæ consuetudine, non pii s et ecclesiasticis ammonitionibus devocati, sed tyrannicæ violentiæ impetu non parumper absteriti, duplicato periculo ad illam quotidie redeunt. Illi autem, laicos dico, quibus amministris tam ordinata agi placuit capitula, sua auctoritate defendentes vesaniam, nihil est quod contra propositum christianitatis non audeant, ecclesiæ mysteria contemnere, parvulos suos lavacro salutari fraudare, ipsi absque humili peccatorum confessione et solemnibus ecclesiæ viatico migrare religiosum deputant sibi ad peccatorum redemptionem sufficere arbitrantes, si commissum sibi in pastores suos sæviendi officium strenue adimpleant. Sigberti Gemblacensis Apologia. Lib. de Lite (M. G. H.), 2, 438-39.

Another observer thus describes the effect of Gregory's measures. Legem enim illam ad scandalum in æcclesia mittendum tartaro voemente prolatam negligentia, aiunt, exceptit, stultitia promulgavit, amentia roborare contendit; per quam pax æcclesiæ convulsa, tranquillitas populi Dei sublata, pulcherrima æcclesiastici ordinis distinctio confusa, fides concussa, tota denique magni patrisfamilias domus sedibus disiectis, tricliniis transmutatis, vasis transpositis, omnino inordinata et confusa. Theodericus Viridunensis Episcopus Hilthebrando Papæ. Lib. de Lite 1, 288

For another account of the lawlessness of the people at this time, see Sigberti Chronicon (ann. 1074), Script. (M. G. H.), 6, 363.

seen.¹ The result of his vigor and persistence was this: celibacy was generally recognized by ecclesiastical authorities to be a canonical obligation, and it was more successfully enforced than at any time hitherto. The indifference of national or local synods was overcome and the bishops of southern and western Europe, save a small number in Germany for the time being, imposed the rule upon their clergy. But those individuals whom necessity forced into obedience for the time being relapsed as soon as the pressure was withdrawn, and the Papacy abated its assiduity.

The next thirty-five years were filled with efforts like those of the past to compel the obdurate clergy to obey; but until 1123 no new penalties were imposed and no new principles introduced into the legislation upon the subject. The Lateran Council of that year, however, declared dissolved all marriages contracted after ordination.² Prior to this time the sanctity of marriage had been respected and its vows considered superior to all others. The canons had permitted the surrender of either wife or office, the choice being left to the individual. Nevertheless, if the former alternative were chosen, the persons concerned were considered to be still bound by the marriage vows, and as has been already observed, the wife was sometimes compelled to enter a nunnery in order to make their violation impossible.³ But this canon made the obligations of holy orders superior to all others. It was a result of the rapidly developing doctrine that the characteristics of the priest were indelible, that the powers and obligations assumed at ordina-

¹ Cuius prudentia non solum in Italia, sed etiam in Theutonicis partibus re-frenata est sacerdotum incontinentia; scilicet quod predecessores ejus in Italia prohibuerunt, hoc ipse in aliis aeclesie catholice partibus prohibere studiosus attemptavit. Bertholdi Annales (ann. 1073) Script. (M. G. H.), 5, 276. See also, Ottonis Frisingensis Chronicon Liber 6, cap. 34. Ib. 20, 246.

² Presbyteris, diaconibus, subdiaconibus, et monachis, concubinas habere, seu matrimonia contrahere, penitus interdicimus; contracta quoque matrimonia ab hujusmodi personis disjungi, et personas ad penitentiam debere redigi, juxta sacerorum canonum diffinitiones, judicamus. Con. Lat. (1123), c. 21, Ib. 1114.

³ See p. 15.

tion could never be lost and the priest was absolved from all duties which conflicted with the ones then imposed.¹ The Synod of Pisa (1134) gave clear and definite expression to the principle,² and the Lateran Council, convoked by Innocent II, erected it into a doctrine by the declaration that a marriage contracted in violation of the law of celibacy was not a marriage.³ This attempt of the Popes to establish the principle that a vow of virginity destroyed the binding force and sanctity of the marriage ties was not supported by all ecclesiastics. Their doubts of the correctness of the principle found expression in the canon law, where Gratian asserted that, although a vow of chastity is offered at ordination, nevertheless the strength of the ties of matrimony is so great that they cannot be dissolved by it.⁴

Alexander III, acting in harmony with the Lateran Synod of 1123, decreed that those who had only assumed the religious habit, persons in minor orders, were not thereby incapacitated from contracting the obligations of matrimony; the implication being that those who had made a formal vow, or had been ordained, could not contract a valid marriage.⁵ The privilege

¹ Bocquet believes that this canon aimed only to secure the actual separation of wife from husband and was not a declaration of the nullity of marriage. *Le Célibat Ecclésiastique*, L. Bocquet, p. 189.

On the other hand, Hefele believes that sacerdotal marriage was made invalid by the Council of Melfi (1089), because the wives of the clergy were there condemned to servitude. Hefele, *Beitrage zur Kirchengeschichte*, 1, 133. Hinchius, by the Synod of Rheims (1119). *Kirchenrecht*, 1, 155.

² *Con. Pis.* (1134), c. 1. *Mansi*, 21, 489.

³ *Ut autem lex continentiae, et Deo placens munditia in ecclesiasticis personis et sacris ordinibus dilatetur: statuimus quatenus episcopi, presbyteri . . . qui sanctum transgredientes propositum uxores sibi copulare praesumpserint, separentur. Hujusmodi namque copulationem, quam contra ecclesiasticam regulam constat esse contractam, matrimonium non esse censemus. Qui etiam ab invicem separati pro tantis excessibus condignam poenitentiam agant.* *Con. Lat.* 2 (1139), c. 7. *Harduin*, 6, Pt. 2, 1209.

⁴ *Corpus Juris Canonici*, *Comment.* in c. 1, *Dist.* 27.

⁵ *Quod qui habitum religionis susceperit, si professionem non fecit, et aliquam sibi postea matrimonio copulaverit, non est cogendus ab ea recedere, et ad ecclesiam redire.* *Index in Lat. Synod.* Pt. 6, c. 9. *Harduin*, 6, Pt. 2, 1697.

of marrying thus depended upon the nature of the vow taken by the ecclesiastic. If the vow were simple, it was not considered a preventive of marriage, but if solemn it was so considered; the distinction between a simple and a solemn vow being that the former was taken privately; the latter publicly, with the official recognition of the church.¹ Ordination being a ceremony performed *in conspectu Ecclesiæ* a vow of chastity then taken was of course a solemn vow and invalidated future marriage. Further, the words of Gratian indicate that ordination transformed a simple vow, already taken, into a solemn vow, and the principle was repeated in a decretal of Boniface VIII.²

Of course a marriage existing prior to the taking of holy orders was not annulled by them.³ Thus, by the end of the twelfth century, there had been developed from the commands of Siricius that the married clergy should cease conjugal relations, the doctrine that ordination rendered them incapable of marriage. Married laymen and married clergy of the minor orders were allowed to be ordained, however, upon the condition that they take a vow of chastity.

¹ Idem singulare votum, aliud est privatum, aliud solemne. Privatum est in abscondito factum; solemne vero in conspectu ecclesie factum. Qui privatum faciunt votum continentie, matrimonium contrahere non debent; quin contrahendo mortaliter peccant. Si tamen contraxerint, non separentur, quia probari non potest quod occulte factum est. Qui vero solemniter vovent, nullatenus conjugium inire queunt; quibus non solum nubere, sed et velle, damnabile est. Petri Lombardi Sententiæ, Lib. 4, Dist. 38¹ Pat. Lat., 192, 932

² Hic distinguendum est, quod uouentium alii sunt simpliciter uouentes, . . . alii sunt, quibus post uotum accedit benedictio consecrationis, uel propositum religionis, . . . Corpus Juris Canonici, Dist. 27, comment. in c. 8.

Further, since by ordination an office was assumed to which custom and law had attached the prohibition to marry, the taking of holy orders even without a vow of chastity, was considered an impediment to marriage. Monemus ut universi presbyteri in sacris ordinibus constituti continent, et casti vivere studeant, cum voto continentie tacite sint constricti. Synodus Claramontensis, Pars 2, cap. 1. Harduin, 7, 604.

Omnis enim recipiens ordinem sacrum, implicite saltem committit votum continentie. Oratio Episcopi Laudensis in Constant. Con., von der Hardt, 5, P. 1, 125.

³ Extrav. Joh., 22, Tit., 6, cap. un.

But while Papal and synodal legislation left nothing to be desired in definite enactment and severity of penalties, it was generally disregarded throughout Christendom during the twelfth century. The determined efforts of Gregory VII, Urban II and Alexander II, had been without lasting effect upon the lives of the clergy, though their efforts contributed much to the measure of success which Innocent III enjoyed.

As Germany was separated from the Papacy by the schism which originated in the contest between Henry IV and Gregory VII, it was not to be expected that the Papal decrees would be obeyed there, and although the action of the Council of Guastella (1106) ¹ again subjected Germany to Papal legislation, marriage continued.²

In France the clergy were equally stubborn in their refusal to surrender their wives, and some even disregarded the laws against bigamy.³

The legislation of the early twelfth century in Spain shows that the decrees of Gregory VII had not found more than partial obedience⁴ and the church having failed to enforce its laws, the secular authority interposed, punishing the guilty priests with deprivation of benefice and suspension from office, and their wives and children with slavery.⁵

The chroniclers of events in England during the late eleventh

¹ *Annalista Saxoni.* (ann. 1106), *Script. (M. G. H.)* 6, 745. For Council of Guastella, *Harduin*, 6, P. 2, 1883.

² *Non erubescant sacerdotes uxores ducere, palam nuptias faciebant, nefanda matrimonia contrahebant . . . Brunonis Episcopi Libellus.* *Lib. de Lite*, 2, 546-547. See also, *Gerhohi Tractatus adversus Simoniacos*, c. 2. *Pat. Lt.* 194, 1338. *Gerhohi Comment. in Psalm. 64*, c.49. *Ib.* 39-40.

³ . . . *Ivonis Carnotensis Episcopus Ep. ad Daimbertum; Ep. 200.* *Pat. Lt.* 162, 207. *Ep. 277, Ib.* 279. Paschal II referred thus to France: *Gravem valde rem ex partibus vestris audivimus, quia post tanta sanctorum decreta pontificum, post interdicta conciliorum, clericalis ordinis viri qui audent, publice; qui non audent, occulte mulieribus sociantur.* *Paschalis II Ep. Ep.* 415, *Pat. Lt.* 163, 369.

⁴ *Concubinæ clericorum manifeste ejeciantur.* *Con. Pal. (1129)*, c. 5. *Harduin*, 6, P. 2, 2053. See also, *Paschalis, II, Ep. 10.* *Mansi*, 20, 1001.

⁵ *Las Siete Partidas*, P. 1, Tit. 6,1, 41 T. 1, 141.

and early twelfth centuries describe the Anglo-Saxon clergy as hopelessly sunken in sensual pleasures.¹ The first vigorous efforts for reform after Gregory VII were opposed on the ground that to deny the privilege of marriage to the clergy would result in offenses infinitely worse.² The exertions of Anselm (1102) were without result,³ and Honorius II sent John of Crema to England (1126) to stamp out the opposition there.⁴ He accomplished nothing, and Henry I (1129), who employed threats of reform as a means of extorting money from the offending priests, likewise failed.⁵ The close of the twelfth century apparently saw no improvement, for sacerdotal marriage was common during the reign of John, and continued to be practiced to some degree until the middle of the thirteenth century.⁶

In Ireland there was a relaxation of all ecclesiastical discipline by the first quarter of the twelfth century, and clerical marriage with the hereditary transmission of benefices was general.⁷ A partial reform was accomplished, but in the second half of the century the English invaders brought with them their married priests whose customs were quickly imitated by

¹ *Optimates, gulæ et veneri dediti, ecclesiam more christiano mane non adibant; sed in cubiculo, et inter uxorios amplexus, matutinarum sollemnia et missarum a festinante presbytero auribus tantum libabant.* De Gestis Regnum Anglorum, Guillelmus Malmesberiensis, Lib. 3, §245. *Rerum Britannicarum Medii Aevii Scriptores*, 90, Pt. 2, 304-305. See also Ordericus Vitalis, *Hist. Eccles.* Lib. 4, cap. 6. *Société de l'Histoire de France*, 2, 208.

² *Henrici Hunt. Hist. Lib. 7. Rer. Brit. Med. Aev. Script. 74, 234.*

³ *Ib.* 234.

⁴ *Ib.* 245-246.

⁵ *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, Ann. 1129. Rer. Brit. Med. Aev. Script. 2, 226.*

⁶ *Poems of Walter Mapes, ed. Wright. De concubinis Sacerdotum. P. 171-172. Ep. Alex. III. Mansi 21, 1088.*

⁷ *Verum mos pessimus inoleverat quorundam diabolica ambitione potentum, sedem sanctum obtentum iri hæreditaria successione. Nec enim patiebantur episcopari, nisi qui essent de tribu et familia sua. Nec parum processerat execranda successio, decursis jam in hac malitia quasi generationibus quindecim. Bernardi Vita S. Malachie, cap. 10. Pat. Lt. 182, 1086.*

the Irish clergy in those portions of the island where the two races were in contact.¹

This century found marriage yet prevalent among the bishops of Denmark, and so probably among the lower clergy also.² Calixtus II was the first Pope to turn attention to this corner of Europe, and the Council of Rheims (1120) decreed that the Danish clergy should give up their wives.³ The clergy of the Scandinavian peninsula were undisturbed as yet, for not until the thirteenth century did the councils of Norway and Sweden introduce the Papal legislation concerning marriage.⁴

In Hungary the ecclesiastical laws of King Coloman, dating from the first decade of the twelfth century, contain the first definite prohibition of clerical marriage. They forbid married priests and deacons to officiate at the altar unless, the wife consenting and vowing chastity, they be forever separated.⁵ Coloman's laws were without more than temporary effect, however. In Poland marriage had continued without restriction until the very end of the twelfth century, but the Papal legate, Peter of Capua, who then undertook a reformation, enjoyed considerable success in his efforts to enforce the canons.⁶

The expected results of ecclesiastical marriage were not wanting. The sons of priests frequently succeeded their fathers; benefices became hereditary; the property of the church was portioned among the sons of the clergy. In Ireland hereditary succession was the rule,⁷ and as clerical marriage was usual in England, it probably prevailed there.⁸ The

¹ Giraldus Cambrensis, *de Rebus a se Gestis*, Lib. 2, cap. 13. *Rer. Brit. Med. Aev. Script.* 21, 66.

² Pontoppidan, 1, 152.

³ *Ib.* 1, 349.

⁴ *Ib.* 1, 349.

⁵ Alberici *Compilatio Decretorum sub Colomanno Rege*, c. 42. Péterffy, 1, P. 1, p. 50.

⁶ Harduin, 6, P. 2, 1937.

Długossi *Hist. Poloniæ*, Lib. 6, T. 1, 575.

⁷ See p. 36.

⁸ *Con. Lond.* (1237), c. 17. Harduin, 7, 297.

words of the Council of Rouen (1189) indicate that the sons of priests were often ordained to the benefices of their fathers;¹ and in Spain the king found it necessary to prohibit the same practice. In western Germany the clergy frequently portioned their sons from the property left in their care.² Lucius III, upon his accession to the Papal chair (1181), stated that he found hereditary succession to benefices claimed as a right.³ The thirty-first canon of the Lateran Council held by Innocent III was directed against this custom, and the fact that this important assemblage considered that it demanded decisive action, proves that it must have been widespread.⁴

In the enforcement of celibacy, as in so many other particulars, Innocent III profited by the zeal and activity of his predecessors, and with the Papal power at its zenith, was able to approach nearer than hitherto the ideal toward which they had long been struggling. The impetus which his vigor and energy gave to the movement culminated within a generation after his death in the promulgation in the most remote parts of Roman Catholic Christendom of the law of celibacy. Coun-

¹ *Con. Rot.* (1189), c. 6. *Harduin*, 6, P. 2, 1905.

² *Ecclesie jure hereditario a filiis sacerdotum possidentur. . . . Conjugati sacros ordines capiunt et beneficia ecclesiastica et coniuges coniunguntur. . . . Nec res, quas acquirunt post ordines, ecclesiis sed liberis suis relinquunt Emonis Chronicon, ann. 1219. Script. (M. G. H.) 23, 491. Menkonis Chronicon ann. 1271. Ib. 559.*

³ *Sane relationis vestre tenore comperimus pravam apud vos, sub predecessorum vestrorum negligentia, consuetudinem introductam, quod filii eorum, qui vestras ecclesias tenuerunt, ut . . . patribus ab ipsis antecessoribus nostris confirmationem de obtinendis ecclesiis, consecuti, sub reprehensibili collusione volunt ipsas ecclesias jure successionis habere, et talium confirmationem obtentu aliqua pensione retenta, patres filios sibi constituere successores. Lucii III Ep. 88. In Pat. Lt. as Lucii II Ep. 94. T. 179, 931.*

⁴ *Ad abolendam pessimam, quæ in plerisque inolevit ecclesiis corruptelam, firmiter prohibemus, ne canonicorum filii, maxime spurii, canonici fiant in sæcularibus ecclesiis, in quibus instituti sunt patres; . . . Con. Lat. 4, c. 31. Harduin, 7, 43.*

cils were held in Norway,¹ Sweden,² Denmark³ and Hungary⁴ in which were enacted canons prohibiting marriage. As in the case of central and southwestern Europe, it cannot be positively determined whether or not they were obeyed; for the word concubine, generally used by contemporary historians and chroniclers, was then ambiguous, being applied indifferently to wives and to illicit consorts; but it is certain that Innocent's watchfulness put an end to open defiance of the law, although evasions of every sort were employed.⁵

One result of these later more vigorous efforts to enforce the canons was an increase of sexual crimes among the clergy. The contemporary chronicles and the writings of both the friends and enemies of the church show that many of its ministers were guilty of habitual crime and that many others were sunk in depravity. Concubinage was the commonest offence, and the councils of the thirteenth century repeatedly enacted prohibitions against it.⁶ The many references to the keeping of concubines so publicly as to cause scandal, leaves one in doubt whether the clergy at large were so shameless as actually to keep mistresses openly, or whether these women had been secretly married to them. But the frequent mention of the fact that the woman was often maintained outside the dwellings of the ecclesiastics makes the former practice credible.⁷

¹ Pontoppidan, 1, 504.

² Innocentii III Regist. Lib., 16, Ep. 118. Pat. Lt. 216, 914. Con. Schen. (1248). Harduin, 7, 423.

³ Pontoppidan, 1, 349. Con. Brem. (1266). Hartzheim, 4, 580.

⁴ Synod. Pos. sub Carolo I. (1209) c. 5. Peterffy 1, P. 1, 140-141.

⁵ For action of the Lateran Council (1215), held by Innocent III, upon celibacy, see c. 14. Harduin, 31 7,.

⁶ For thirteenth century. Con. Lon. (1200), c. 10. Harduin, 6, P. 2, 1961. Constit. Gallonis (1208), c. 1. Ib. 1975. Constit. Ricardi Poor Episc. (1217), c. 6. Harduin, 7, 90. Con. Germ. (1225), c. 1. Ib. 137. Con. Rot. (1231), c. 13. Ib. 186. Con. Lon. (1237), c. 16. Ib. 297. Con. Bit. (1246), c. 19, Ib., 410. Con. Bitur. (1286), c. 7. Ib. 952. Con. Rot. (1299), c. 1. Ib. 1202.

⁷ *Inhibemus etiam districtius, ne clerici in sacris ordinibus constituti, etiamsi beneficiati non fuerint, in propriis domibus, vel in alienis, publice focarias*

This widespread disobedience among the clergy of the thirteenth century gave rise to many enactments directed against the consorts of ecclesiastics, whether wives or concubines, and against their children. The purpose of this legislation was to prevent the clergy from maintaining or enriching their female companions and children with church property, and also to make the condition of a priest's family so humiliating that women would be deterred from accepting such a position, and the clergy themselves from begetting offspring doomed to an ignominious social condition. Leo IX had enslaved the wives of the Roman clergy, recommending that all bishops do likewise, and Urban II had pursued the same course,¹ but the zeal of the reformers of the eleventh century was lacking in the church of the thirteenth century and the councils

habeant, unde scandalum oriatur, Con. Paris., (1212) c. 4. Harduin, 6, P. 2' 2001. Addentes, ne clerici beneficiati, vel in sacris ordinibus constituti, in hospitiiis suis tenere publice concubinas præsument, nec alibi cum scandalo accessum habeant a eadem. Con. Oxon., (1222), c. 34. Harduin, 7, 122. See further, Con. Col., (1260), c. 1. Ib. 518. Con. Vien (1267), c. 1. Ib. 581. Con. Sen., (1279), c. 1. Ib. 649. Con. Lon. (1268), c. 8. Ib. 621. Syn. Oxon., (1287), c. 18. Ib. 1093. The wrath of the church authorities being particularly directed against the ecclesiastics who dared "*detinere publice concubinas*" seems almost like connivance with those who in their relations with women did not "*jamam negligunt*." See canons and references of above note; also, Con. Grad. (1296), c. 15, Mansi, 24, 1168. Synod. Col. (1280), c. 2. Harduin, 7, 821. Con. Her. (1287), c. 5. Ib. 1133. To disobey the canons forbidding marriage was always more reprehensible in the eyes of the church than to maintain a concubine. . . . et quod sacerdotes fiant mariti, multo esse gravius peccatum quam si plurimas domi meretrices alant. . . . Joannis Sledani Comment. Lib. 4, p. 43, Basiliæ, 1556. And to maintain a concubine publicly was considered worse than to do so secretly; the reason being, of course, that continued public disobedience was a defiance of ecclesiastical authority which brought contempt upon the church. De cetero quia Stephanus clericus in archidiaconatu prædicti archiepiscopi adulteram in domo sua et commatrem dicitur detinere; si hoc publicum est et manifestum, ob tantum excessum, animadversione debita, nullius contradictione et appellatione obstante corrigas. Con. Lat. (1179), Mansi 20, 351. Lucius III made the usual distinction between open and secret offences. Mansi, 22, 442.

¹ See pages 22, 32.

were contented with more humane measures. Edmund, Archbishop of Canterbury, decreed that the guilty women should either marry or enter a nunnery.¹ They were forbidden to attend mass, and the sacraments of the church were refused them.² The Council of Rouen commanded that their heads be shaved in the presence of the people on Sunday or some other solemn occasion.³ Again, it was enacted that they be excommunicated and their excommunication publicly announced.⁴ They were often forbidden to receive any of the property of the church by testament,⁵ but the action of the Council of Mainz (1225), shows this evil to have been almost ineradicable. This council enacted that all ecclesiastics leaving the fruits of their benefices to concubines or children, and any to whom such inheritances might descend, were to be refused Christian burial. Whoever aided in the preparation or execution of such a testament was, *ipso facto*, excommunicated, and as long as a benefice or income thus bequeathed was in the possession of such heirs, the church concerned was declared under interdict.⁶

In general, the church authorities opposed the succession of sons to the benefices of their fathers because of the danger that benefices so transferred should become hereditary; and although canons and decretals varied as to legitimate sons, they were unanimous in excluding from holy orders illegitimate sons who had not become monks.⁷ Clement III, however, contrary to all preceding regulations, expressly permitted the legitimate sons of Irish bishops to be ordained and to succeed to their fathers' benefices,⁸ and allowed the ordination of illegitimate

¹ Const. Prov. S. Edmundi Cant. Episc. c. 4. Harduin, 7, 268.

² Con. Oxon. (1222), c. 35. Ib. 122. Con. Lon. (1268), c. 8. Ib. 621.

³ Con. Rot. (1231), c. 13. Ib. 186.

⁴ Synod. Colon. (1280), c. 2. Ib. 821. Synod. Cic. (1289), c. 6. Ib. 1153.

⁵ Con. Mog. (1261), c. 27. Mansi, 23, 1090. Con. Lan. (1278), c. 4. Mansi, 24, 213. Synod. Colon. (1280), c. 2. Harduin, 7, 821. Con. Mog. (1225), c. 5. Mansi, 23, 4. Hartzheim, 3, 589, 595.

⁶ Con. Ger. (1225), c. 5. Harduin, 7, 138-139.

⁷ Corp. Jur. Canon. Decretales Gregorii 9, Lib. 1, Tit. 17, cap. 1.

⁸ Ib. cap. 12.

sons when a Papal dispensation had been obtained.¹ The fourth Lateran Council forbade illegitimate sons to officiate in their fathers' churches, declaring void the institution of all such in the paternal benefices.² The later canons of the thirteenth century were in agreement with this, and strictly forbade the succession of sons without distinction as to legality of birth. The decree was usually accompanied by the command that they receive no property from their fathers by testament. The clergy were commanded neither to keep their children in their own homes because of the scandal it would cause,³ nor to be present at their marriages or funerals.⁴ The Hungarian Council of Ofen (1279) enacted that the children of ecclesiastics should be the slaves of the church.⁵

Aside from concubinage, and marriage, which all this legislation shows to have been common, the clergy were guilty of much more serious crimes. The constitutions of Gallo, Papal legate in Germany, ordain that priests shall not dwell in the

¹ *Ib.* cap. 14.

² *Ib.* cap. 16.

³ *Con. Bud.* (1279), c. 26. *Harduin*, 7, 798. *Con. Lau.* (1278), c. 14. *Mansi*, 24, 213. *Con. Bit.* (1286), c. 8. *Ib.* 952.

⁴ *Syn. Colon.* (1280), c. 2. *Harduin*, 7, 821.

⁵ *Hefele, Conciliengeschichte*, 6, 192. But these unlucky individuals who were thus despised by their fellow men, and, at times, persecuted by the church, were not without defenders. Their own innocence and the injustice of the treatment to which they were subjected was proved by a long array of those arguments which were dear to the heart of the mediæval man. It was urged that the frequent use in the New Testament of the words, "our father," showed that all Christians were brothers; that by baptism they had been made one body, heirs of God, a chosen, holy race, and that consequently the sons of clerks could not be excluded from the priesthood. It was noted that the children of priests had been famous and honorable; examples being John the Baptist who was a son of Zacharias, and the Virgin Mary who was a descendant of Aaron. In the genealogy of Christ himself were mentioned four women, so that it might be made known that the Saviour of sinners did not disdain to be born of woman. Solomon, an illegitimate son, was allowed to build the temple, which honor was denied to David, although he was of legitimate birth. *d'Achery, Spicelgium*, 3, 448-449. *Libelli de Lite* (*M. G. H.*) 3, 649 sq.

same houses with their mothers or other female relatives.¹ In order that there might be no suspicion of illicit relations, another German synod forbade priests to dwell with their mothers, sisters, or aunts; and similar provisions indicative of depravity are to be found in the enactments of other councils.² Such offences were probably unusual, however, although these and similar enactments, combined with other evidence, for example, the sweeping denunciation of Alexander IV, prove that in the thirteenth century, many of the clergy were morally degraded.³

¹ Moneantur quoque, ne matres vel uxores, aliasque conjunctas personas secum habeant; cum quibus etsi nihil sævi criminis fœdus naturale existimari permittat, tamen frequenter, suggerente diabolo, cum talibus noscitur fuisse facinus perpetratum. Const. Gallon. c. 1. Harduin, 6, P. 2, 1975.

² Stat. Synod. Eccles. Nem. c. 5. Martene, Thesaurus Anecdotorum, 4, 1044, 1102. Eadmeri Hist. Nov. Lib. 4. Rev. Brit. Med. Aev. Script. 81, 213. Poems of Walter Mapes, 156-157. Matt. Paris. Chron. Maj. Rer. Brit. Med. Aev. Script. 57, Pt. 3, 430-431. Stat. Ecc. Col. (1260), Hartzheim, 3, 589. Con. Oxon. (1222) c. 34. Harduin, 7, 122. Con. Rot. (1231), c. 13. Ib. 186. Con. Prov. Fitzlar. (1246). Hartzheim, 3, 574. Con. Mog. (1261), c. 27, 39. Ib. 604, 606-607. Con. Lon. (1168), c. 8. Harduin, 7, 621. Con. Bit. c. 7. Ib. 952.

³ Sed ecce Lethalis incuriæ sopor pastoralis vitæ vigilantium, quod gementes dicimus, oppressis videtur in plurimis, prout testatur nimia de plerisque regionibus; clamans christiani populi correptela, quæ cum deberet ex sacerdotalis antidoti curari medelis, invalescit, proh dolor, ex malorum contagione, quod procedit a clero, ita ut alicubi verum sit, quod ex Prophetica querela testatur; Factus est inquiens, sicut populus sic sacerdos. Malitiam namque dierum labentium, quæ cum tempore corrumpit et mores, dante quam plurimis ex impuniata audacia semper in deteriora proclivem infrenis licentiæ libertatem, nonnulli clerici præcipiti lubricæ voluptatis arbitrio laxas committentes habentem, post carnis suæ concupiscentias abierunt et relegata pœne penitus a conversatione vitæ suæ clericalis mundiciæ, honestate, tenent etiam in conspectu populi concubinas, cum quibus impudicæ, frontis irreverentiam induens fœdas manus et fœtidas, quas sordidis libidinosè coninquationis fœtibus immiserunt, non erubescunt in suum periculum, et ruinam populi sacris ministeriis immisceri, a quibus ob publici concubinatus insaniam quæ nulla tergiversatione sceleris, vel secundum scita canonum, tam quoad se quam ad alios sunt suspensi, et ne quis talium Missam audire præsumat, arctius in eorum contemptum Canonici auctoritatis constitutio interdicit. Chron. Aug. Ep. Alex. 4. Freher et Struve 1, 546.

Under Boniface VIII the legislation concerning celibacy was completed for the time being. He forbade the admission to minor orders of men who did not intend to proceed to major orders, which tended to prevent marriage among the former,¹ and mitigated the severity shown to clerks of the minor orders by securing to them the canonical privileges of the clergy as long as they wore the tonsure and clerical vestments.²

The history of the fourteenth century is a repetition of that of the thirteenth, repeated legislation, open or secret disobedience, illicit indulgence, unmentionable sins. If the descriptions of the clergy upon which we must depend for information had proceeded from the enemies of the church, their authors might be liable to the charge of wilful exaggeration. But the fact that men of unquestioned orthodoxy and undoubted loyalty concur in their judgments of the morals of the hierarchy renders their testimony unimpeachable. When John Ruysbroch³ of the Netherlands, Matthew of Cracow,⁴ Benedict XII,⁵ and many others unanimously declare that the clergy

¹ Corp. Jur. Canon. Sexti Decretales, Lib. 1, Tit. 9, cap. 4.

² Ib. Lib. 3, Tit. 2, cap. 1. Boniface VIII summed up in final form the rules concerning the effect of vows in preventing marriage. . . . presentis declarandum duximus oraculo sanctionis, illud solum votum debere dici solenne, quantum ad post contractum matrimonium dirimendum, quod solennisatum fuerit per susceptionem sacri ordinis, aut per professionem expressam vel tacitam, factam alicui de religionibus per sedem apostolicam approbatis. Reliqua vero vota, etsi quandoque matrimonium impediant contrahendum, et quanto manifestius sunt emissa, tanto propter plurimum scandalum et exemplum durior poenitentia transgressoribus debeatur, non tamen rescindere possunt matrimonia post contracta. Ib. Lib. 3, Tit. 15, cap. un.

³ Quam vero probosum ac detestandum est quosdam ex rebus ecclesiasticis vicitantes, quos anima et corpore castos esse oportebat, palam domi suae proles ex se genitas alere ac sustentare, atque inde tamen non solum nullo rubore affici, nullo pudore suffundi, sed etiam multum placere sibi, perinde ac si ex legitimis eas uxoribus, susceperint. Joannis Ruysbrochii Opera, p. 150.

⁴ Concubinatus in clerico publice et solemniter exercetur. Matthaei de Cracovia Episeo. Vorm de Squal. Rom. Cur. cap. 2. Mon. Med. Aev. Walchi, T. 5, 8.

⁵ . . . in Hispania, ubi multa bona et salubria ordinavit, constitutionesque fecit quam plurimas, praesertim contra concubinarios ecclesiasticos, qui

maintained illicit relations with women, there is no reason to doubt their assertion, particularly as contemporary denials of it do not appear.

The fifteenth century not only saw no improvement in ecclesiastical morality, but witnessed the failure to make reforms by the agency from which the best results were expected, a General Council. That the efforts of the Council of Constance were fruitless was not due to any lack of consciousness of the needs of the church, but to jealousies which had their source in national antagonism, politics and the conflicting privileges of the orders of the hierarchy. Moreover as it was the very members of the council themselves who most needed reformation, there was little likelihood that vigorous and efficient measures would be adopted.

The many sermons and addresses delivered at the council by churchmen from all parts of Europe deserve some credence as a picture of the clergy of that time. As in all periods since the canons had rendered them incapable of contracting a legal marriage, they dwelt with women to whom they were bound by every marital tie save that of a formal marriage ceremony.¹ The effect of this practice upon their congregations was most pernicious, for it accustomed them to evil with the invariable result.² Other crimes were common, and the earnest church-

protunc erant in illis partibus infiniti. *Vitæ Paparum Aven.* Baluzius, *Prima Vita Benedicti XII*, T. 1, 204.

Litteræ Benedicti XII. Miscellan. Baluzius, P. 264. *Gersonis Opera*, T. 2, Append.

¹ Et maxime obviandum esset illi scandalosissimæ consuetudini, seu potius corruptelæ, qua plures hodie non verentur tenere publice concubinas. *Petri de Alliaco Card. Cam. Tract. de Reformatione.* *Gersonis Opera*, 2, Append. 913. Crimen præfatum (concubinage) in multis locis cum maximo catholicorum scandalo, et in totius clericalis contemptum ordinis frequentatur. von der Hardt, 1, P. 10, 635.

² Cum propter crimen concubinitus, quo multi Ecclesiastici et religiosi viri insciuntur, habeantur Ecclesia Dei et totus clerus in derisum, abominationem et opprobrium cunctis gentibus; et illud nefandissimum scelus in Ecclesia Dei adeo invaluit, ut jam non credant christiani simplicem fornicationem esse peccatum mortale. *Con. Paris. (1429) c. 23.* *Mansi*, 23, 1107.

men bent upon reform were unsparing in their denunciations of their offending brethren.¹ Their misdeeds were so frequent and so unconcealed that the example set by them was generally accounted an evil influence upon their parishioners, and Nicholas of Clemangis reckoned non-residence a benefit to the people for this reason.² As in the past, ecclesiastical property was seriously impaired by the extravagances of luxurious living and the bestowal of dowries and inheritances.³

The moral condition of many of the clergy had long been so abhorrent to conscientious churchmen of pure lives, and so dangerous to those within the range of their influence, that the natural corrective was suggested by some ecclesiastics, and in some cases applied by the laity. In parts of western Europe clerical marriage was looked upon by them as a safeguard for the virtue of their wives and daughters, and as the only remedy for the flagitious lives of priests and prelates. In Spain the people compelled many of the clergy to take wives, and early

¹ Nunc multo magis dici possunt, quia ecclesia a malis ad peiora processit et in omni tam spirituali quam temporali statu abiecto decore virtutum, in variam cecidit turpitudinem vitiorum. Auctoris Anon. Oratio. Mon. Med. Aev., Fasci. Sec. p. 155.

Sed quam flagitiosum sit in viris ecclesiasticis et maxime prelati ad cultum viniæ Domini conductis enarare non est facile, neque ego quomodo illos describam, aut cui monstro comparem, scio. Mon. Med. Aev., Fasc. Tert. p. 108.

² Sed quid eorum tantopere a suis sedibus absentiam accusamus, cum per suam, si illie adessent, præsentiam verisimilius obesse quam prodesse possent. . . . qui suo turpi exemplo gregem per devia abducunt in præcipitium, . . . Nicolaus de Clemangis de Corrupto Ecclesiæ Statu. Fasciculus Rerum Expetendarum ac Fugiendarum. T. 2, Appen. p. 562.

³ Postremo, quicquid de bonis ecclesiæ cum turpibus personis consumunt sacerdotes et clerici. . . . Dionysius Carthusianus, Opera Minora. T. 1, art. 21, 409.

Vilis plebs te sacerdotum nunc cachinnis atque ludibriis incessit, et odit qui columniandi ansam ultro præbueris. Dicit namque; Tot hic aut ille scorta domi sue ex patrimonio Crucifixi nutrit, quo non sordida scorta, sed pauperes Christi forent sustentandi. Fasc. Rer. Expet. ac Fug. fol. 216.

Paul III complained that the clergy of all Christendom thus wasted ecclesiastical property. Con. Ang. Wilkins. 3, 605-606. See also Oratio Theobaldi Theologi., von der Hardt 1, Pt. 19, 908.

in the sixteenth century the same practice prevailed in Switzerland.¹ The crime for which prevention was thus sought must have been common, if so ardent a defender of clerical celibacy as Gerson could be led by it to assert that it were better for marriage to be allowed than for the clergy to continue as they were.²

This and the other evil results of celibacy had been foreseen by St. Bernard of Clairvaux and the rule had been opposed by him on the ground that it would result in filling the church with all manner of uncleanness.³ The same argument had been used by his predecessors; for from the time of Paphnutius in the first quarter of the fourth century there had been a steady and, at

¹ Quia vero nonnulli laicorum clericos compellunt, in sacris præcipue ordinibus constitutos, ut aliquas mulieres concubinas recipiant, et cum eis in contubernio publice vivant. . . . Con. Pal. (1322), c. 7. Mansi, 25, 703.

Die Schonische Bauren hatten bereits am Ende des vorigen Seculi dieses unter andern als eine Ursache ihres Aufruhrs angegeben, dass kraft des ersten Verbots, einige Priester bei ihnen die Eheweiber fahren lassen, und funden sich genöthigt, bey dem Ertz-Bischoffen darauf zu insistieren, dass einem Priester sein eigen Weib zu haben erlaubt seyn mögte. Pontoppidan 1, 637.

² Vel inexperti forte erant hi doctores quam generale et quam radicatum sit hoc malum, et quod deteriora flagitia circa uxores aut filias parochianorum et abominaciones horrendæ in aliis provenerint apud multas patrias, rebus stantibus ut stant, si quærentur per tales censuras arceri. Scandalum certum magnum est apud parochianos curati ad concubinam ingressus, sed longe deterius si erga parochianas suas non servaverit castitatem. De Vita Spirit. Animæ, Lect. 4, Cor. 14. Opera Johannis de Gerson, P. 3. Strasbourg, 1494.

Some idea of the extent of the evil may be obtained from the following extract. De luxuria etiam eorundem quid dicam? Cum ipsa jam facta impudicam Prælatorum ac sacerdotum vitam apertissime elament. Nulli enim parcent statui aut sexui feminarum, et sive virgines sint, sive moniales, sive seculares, aut alterius conditionis, indifferente sunt ad omnes. Theoderici Vrie Historia Con. Const., von der Hardt 1, P. 1, 69.

³ Res tamen tam in aperto est, ut mirer quomodo unquam homini christiano persuaderi potuerit, nisi quod hi adeo aut bestiales sunt, ut non advertant, qualiter omni immunditiæ laxat habenas, qui nuptias damnat; . . . Tolle de ecclesia honorabile connubium et torum imnaiculatum (Heb. 13, 4), nonne reples eam concubinariis, incestuosis, seminifluis, mollibus, masculorum concubitoribus, et omni denique genere immundorum Bernardi Sermones in Cantica. Ser. 66, §3. Pat. Lt. 183, 1095.

times, powerful opposition to celibacy which continued to the time of the Council of Trent and proceeded, not from those who desired relief from its restrictions, but from ecclesiastics, both secular and regular, who were moved to resistance solely by the terrible consequences to clergy and people which it entailed. According to Peter Comestor, the devil had never circumvented the church so successfully as when the vow of celibacy was introduced.¹ Alexander III, horrified at the evil lives of the clergy and the danger in which it placed the church, advocated a return to the custom of the Greek Church, and his proposal was supported by all but one of the members of his Curia whose opposition resulted in its rejection.² Aeneas Sylvius, who became Pope Pius II, recommended the same course and had the concurrence of other churchmen therein.³ Among them was the famous canonist, Nicholas Tudeschi, who urged that since the results of the law of celibacy had not been to produce a more spiritual and unworldly clergy, but on the contrary, one stained by illicit indulgence and the most grievous sins, it would be salutary for the church and in the interests of the salvation of souls, to decree that only those who desired to remain celibates should be allowed to take a vow of chastity.⁴

¹ Giraldus Cambrensis *Gemma Ecclesie*, Dist. 2, cap. 6. *Rer. Brit. Med. Aev. Script.* 21, P. 2, 187.

² *Ib.*

³ Platina, *De Vita Pii II.*, 329.

⁴ Nicholas Tudeschi, *Lectura. T. 3, Rubr. de cler. coniug., Super. canon cum olim.* The opinion that the privilege of marriage should be extended to the clergy was not uncommon among men high in the service of the church.

Item, circa concubinariorum provideatur cum effectu, alias sic negligendo prestatet permittere coniugium clericis. Francisci Zabarella *Card. Flor. Capita . . . de Reformatione*, cap. 12. von der Hardt, P. 9, 524.

Quamvis senio gravor, neque mentem habeo ad coniugium, sanctum tamen arbitror, uxores restituis sacerdotibus; quia non est omnibus gratia Dei concessa, ut legi Iudaeorum resistant, ut de Paulo legimus. Extract from a speech of the Cardinal of St. Peter at Basel. Milman, *History of Latin Christianity*, 7, 562.

Alain de Chartier, Secretary of Charles VII of France, expressed himself thus concerning celibacy. Or fut il pieca fait ung nouvel statut en leglise latine qui desseura lordre du sanct mariage dauec la dignite de prestrise soubz

The chief purpose of the Council of Basel was the reformation of these evils, but like the Council of Constance, it did nothing to make the existing legislation more effective, and simply passed anew the oft-repeated canons.¹

During the half century immediately following the Council, and in the opening decades of the sixteenth century, clerical morality continued unimproved, if the testimony of contemporaries is to be believed.² As in the past the priests were charged with corrupting the people both by example and by deliberate seduction.³ The members of the hierarchy upon

couleur de pureté et chaste sans souilleur; maintenant court le statut de concubinage au contraire et les a attraitz aux estatz mondains et aux delictz sensuelz et corporelz. Les Oeuvres d'Alain Chartier, Le Curial, p. 88. Que apporte la constitution de non marier les prestres sinon tourner, et eüter legitime generation pour conuertir en aduoultre; et lhoneste cohabitation dune seule epouse en multiplication de eschouldee luxure. Ib.

¹ Con. Basil. Sess. 20. Harduin, 8, 1194.

² Hinc quosdam religiosos et sacerdotes ac clericos in sacris ordinibus constitutos, videmus multo incorrigibiliores et obstinatiores, carnaliores quam laicis ac mundanis hominibus. Dionysius Carthusianus. Opera minora. T. 1, art. 18, 387. Porro quam multa atque enormia scelera, quam nocentissima scandala, quam lamentabilis ac deflenda deformatio et ruina nascantur ex cohabitatione mulierum cum sacerdotibus atque canonicis, experimentaliter et ad oculus innotescit, ita ut iam a capite usque ad pedes quasi nulla sit sanitas, sicut Osee propheta prädixit, Fornicatio et adulterium inundaverunt. Ib. art. 12, 461. See also art. 20, 21, 55, 408-409, 409-410, 503. Further,

Divi Laurentii Justiniani Opera, cap. 16, 499, and Fasc. Rer. Expet. ac Fug. p. 386.

³ Sæpenumero enim compertum est, ut quum ita consecratis, præsertim sacerdotibus, per jura canonica legitime uxores sunt interditi; quod dehinc pudicitiam matronarum, virginum, laicorum scilicet uxorum, filiarum sororumque attantant, ac noctu inter diuque sollicitant. Efficunt quoque per assiduam ac indefessum laborem, partim muneribus, donis ac blanditiis, ut complures honestæ alioque virgines ac matronæ, partim etiam in secretis, quas vocant, confessionibus (id quod eventu ipso compertum est) diuturna opera labefactentur, ad peccata, offendiculaque commoveantur. Nec raro etiam evenit, ut ii, uxores ac filias, martiis patribusque detineant ac remorentur; minantes interim, gladio, aqua, ignive, ulteros repetitas uxores; Sacri Romani Imperii Principum ac Procerum Gravamina centum cap. 21. Goldast, Const. Imperiales, T. 1, 464.

whom depended the maintenance of discipline were sometimes lax, and frequently, as had long been the custom, accepted bribes for allowing the priests to retain their wives or concubines.¹ According to Trithemius, so many priests lived openly with women to whom they were bound by licit or illicit ties that they were beginning to view marriage as their right; and he states that if any bishop had wished to enforce obedience in his diocese, he would have been deterred by the very multitude of offenders.² Those more enlightened and far-seeing among the clergy, who were able to interpret the signs of the times and saw that revolution was coming, assign as one of its principal causes the flagitious lives of their depraved brethren.³

Nulla sacerdotum luxu nunc casta puella est. . . Conradi Celtis Elegia Amorum, Vienna et Norimbergæ 1502, Fol. 30.

¹ Quod pralati, præsertim episcopi, innumeris atque magnis vitiis involvuntur, qui peccata subditorum suorum non satis acriter ac frequenter corripiunt et castigant. Dion Carthus. cap. 31, p. 391.

Jam illud obsecro quale est, quod plerisque in Diocesisibus, rectores parochiarum ex certo et conducto cum suis Prælatis pretio, passim et publice concubinas tenent Nichlaus de Clemangis, de Corrupt. Eccles. Stat. Fasc. Rer. Expet. et Fug. 2, 562.

Quia vero in quibusdam regionibus nonnulli jurisdictionem ecclesiasticam habentes, pecuniarios questus a concubinariis percipere non erubescunt, . . . Con. Basil. Sess. 20, Harduin, 8, 1194. For further statements of the existence of this custom, see Dion. Carthus. art. 19, 408. Synod. Regia (1507). Batthyani 1, 568. Synod. Strig. Prov. Peterffy 1, P. 1, 212. Grav. centum Ger. nationis. (1522), Fasc. Rer. Expet. ac Fug. cap. 91, f. 187.

² Adeo vitium hoc incontinentiæ in clero iam prævaluit, ut quasi ceperit esse licitum, quia publicum est. Johannis Trithemii opera pia et spiritualia. Moguntiæ, 1604. Instit. Vitæ sacerdotalis, cap. 1, 769.

³ Pico della Mirandola in a tract, which was addressed to Leo X and the Lateran Council held by him, declared that an intestine revolution could only be prevented by maintenance of discipline. He then proceeds: Luxum cohibe cuiuscunque ordinis, modum pone ambitione, compesce indormitos, et effrenatos libidinis obscenæ furores, suspectis sacerdotum . . . contubernis frena constitue . . . Fasc. Rer. Expet. ac Fug. f. 209. See also Oratio habita in Synodo ab A. C. Lynnichano. Ib. f. 217. Jacobi Wimphelingii Apologia pro Rep. Christ. Argentinæ, 1505. cap. 11.

Cardinal Campeggio, Papal legate to Germany, referred thus to the opinion

Their predictions were soon fulfilled, but as the revolution had its source in the doctrinal disputes originated by Luther, the question of celibacy was not at first given a prominent place. By the summer of 1520, however, Luther had formed his opinion concerning celibacy for the secular clergy, and although still acknowledging the legality of monastic vows, denied that the church had the authority to demand a vow of chastity from priests. The arguments against celibacy which he adduced were those which had been used by its opponents for many centuries, namely, that celibacy was not enjoined by Christ, but was of human invention, and that it produced innumerable evil results.¹

During the years 1521-1523 the parish priests of Germany, conscious that the danger of punishment by the old ecclesiastical authorities was lessening, and sure of the approval of their congregations, began to marry.² From this time the practice of clerical marriage accompanied the spread of the Revolution, save in England, where it was not definitely established and legalized until 1559, about twenty-five years after the opening of the revolt there.

The great reforming Council of Trent completed the theory of the Council of Ratisbon summoned by him in 1524. *Paribus sententiis receptum fuit, hanc perditissimam hæresim rudi populo plausibilem ob libertam illi falso persuasam prætextu evangelicæ charitatis, non parvam habuisse occasionem, partim a perditis moribus et vita clericorum. . . . Const. ad removendos abusus per D. Laurentium Card., etc. Fasc. Rer. Expet. ac Fug. f. 211.*

¹ My advice further is, whoever henceforth is ordained priest, he should in no wise take the vow of chastity, but should protest to the bishop that he has no authority to demand this vow, and that it is a devilish tyranny to demand it. Luther's Address to the German nobility. The Ninety-five Theses and Three Primary Works of Dr. Martin Luther. Wace and Buchheim, p. 60. This (celibacy) has been the cause of so much misery that it cannot be told, and has given occasion to the Greek church to separate from us, and has caused infinite disunion, sin, shame and scandal, like everything that the devil does or suggests. Now, what are we to do? My advice is to restore liberty, and to leave every man free to marry or not to marry. *Ib.* p. 59.

² *Spalatini Annales, 1521, 1522, 1523.*

of sacerdotal celibacy by erecting it into a doctrine. The doctrinal canons concerning the sacrament of matrimony enacted by the twenty-fourth session of the Council (Nov. 1563) declare anathema all who assert that those in holy orders are capable of contracting a valid marriage. It also anathematized those who maintained that marriage was superior to virginity, or that it was not better and more blessed to remain a celibate than to be joined in wedlock.¹ To cover with the opprobrium of heresy those who resisted the rule of celibacy, or refused to accept it as an article of faith, was the last resort in the attempt to enforce it.

The disciplinary canons of the Council of Trent were not more stringent or severe than those of the past. Ecclesiastics were prohibited from maintaining wives or other women, either at their own houses or elsewhere.² The offenders who did not reform after one admonition were to lose one third of the fruits of their benefices; if still disobedient, they were to be deprived of all ecclesiastical income and office until manifest reform warranted a dispensation. A relapse following upon these penalties was to be punished by irrevocable deprivation of benefices and honors, along with excommunication.³ The illegitimate sons of ecclesiastics were forbidden to hold benefices in the same parishes with their fathers, and all so offending, who did not resign within three months and seek

¹ Si quis dixerit, clericos in sacris ordinibus constitutos, vel regulares, castitatem solemniter professos, posse matrimonium contrahere, contractumque validum esse, non obstante lege ecclesiastica, vel voto; et oppositum nihil aliud esse, quam damnare matrimonium; posseque omnes contrahere matrimonium, qui non sentiunt se castitatis, etiamsi eam voverint, habere donum; anathema sit; . . . Con. Trident. Sess. 24. c. 9. Harduin, 10, 148.

Si quis dixerit, statum conjugalem anteponendum esse statui virginittatis vel calibatus; et non esse melius ac beatius manere in virginittate aut calibatu quam jungi matrimonio; anathema sit. c. 10. Ib.

² . . . prohibet sancta synodus quibuscumque clericis, ne concubinas, aut alias mulieres, de quibus possit haberi suspicio, in domo, vel extra, detinere, aut cum iis ullam consuetudinem habere audeant; . . . Con. Trident. Sess. 25. Dec. de Ref. cap. 14. Harduin, 10, 186.

³ Ib.

appointment elsewhere, were to be punished by loss of benefice.¹ These canons are the law of the Roman Catholic Church to-day.

¹ Ut paternæ incontinentiæ memoria a locis Deo consecratis, quos maxime puritas sanctitasque decet, longissime arceatur; non liceat filiis clericorum, qui non ex legitimo nati sunt matrimonio, in ecclesiis, ubi eorum patres beneficium aliquod ecclesiasticum habent aut habuerunt, quodcumque etiam dissimile beneficium obtinere; nec in dictis ecclesiis quoque modo ministrare, nec pensiones super fructibus beneficiorum, quæ parentes eorum obtinent, vel alias obtinuerunt, habere. Con. Trident. Sess. 25. Dec. de Ref. cap. 15. Harduin, 10, 187.

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